

FOREWORD

By JULIAN H. STEWARD

000 The Institute of Social Anthropology was created within the Smithsonian Institution to carry out cooperative research and teaching in the field of social anthropology as part of the broad program of Cultural and Scientific Cooperation under the State Department's Interdepartmental Committee.

One of the most important cooperative programs of the Institute of Social Anthropology is with the Escuela Nacional de Antropología del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia of Mexico. The field research of this program will be directed toward a study of the Tarascans of Michoacán, a large group of Indians whose culture is of great interest to science and whose role in national life is of great importance to contemporary Mexico. In undertaking this work, it is the good fortune of the Institute of Social Anthropology to help further a program already extensively carried out by the University of California in cooperation with the Departamento de Antropología de la Escuela de Ciencias Biológicas del Instituto Politécnico Nacional, now the Escuela Nacional de Antropología del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, and the Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas. The present monograph is a community study of Cherán, a Tarascan village, made by Dr. Beals in collaboration with the Mexican institutions.

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● 177 This study is a basic document for understanding native American communities from the point of view both of their individuality and of their gradual assimilation to national life through economic and ideological acculturation. Although Cherán, like many other towns of the Tarascan area, is thought of and thinks of itself as Indian, it is difficult to identify anything that is aboriginal besides its language and racial type. Cherán's domesticated animals, many of its crops, its patterns of cultivation,

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177 and its general technologies and material culture are almost exclusively European. It is presumably European in its individual land ownership and inheritance, though the assumption that aboriginal America had collective land ownership needs further proof. Wholly European is its cash system, involving even a monetary standard of values, loans made for interest, and the purchase from elsewhere of most goods other than the local agricultural and forest products. It might be expected that these European economic patterns would have repercussions in other aspects of the culture; actually, the degree of Hispanicization of religious and social life is astonishing. Religion is strictly Catholic, witchcraft is European in type, and even the curers with their herbs and applications betray virtually nothing that is clearly aboriginal. Cherán's large, compact community of 5,000 persons is seemingly in the Spanish rather than Indian settlement pattern (a problem to be solved by archeology), and it may have been facilitated partly by the use of pack animals for transportation. The social configurations are likewise Spanish: the family, with a large circle of relatives by blood and marriage; the innumerable godparents; the *mayordomías* (festivals for the saints); the elaborate wedding ceremonies; and the dances, music, games, and other recreations.

181 With virtually all aspects of Cherán culture that can be formally categorized clearly Spanish in origin, why is Cherán considered Indian?
177 Cherán's strong attachment to the locality, to the local group, and to traditional culture characterizes many other "Indian" communities in Mexico, Central America, and the Andes. The essential characteristic of an "Indian" would seem to be his failure to integrate emotionally and actively with national life rather than a demonstrable aboriginal content in his culture. The culture that he preserves in com-

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- 177 parative isolation may, in fact, be far more
181 that of 16th-century Spain than that of native
America. This is not to say, however, that a
pure 16th-century Spanish culture survives any-
where. In the case of Cherán, Beals suggests
that the distinctive characteristics may repre-
sent the "pattern influence of native ideas" on
European features, together with the effects of
Bishop Vasco de Quiroga's application of
Thomas More's "Utopia." For historical an-
thropology, these communities clearly pose im-
portant problems concerning 16th-century
Spanish culture, its imposition through the con-
quistadors and priests on the Indians, and the
subsequent long interval during which many
areas stabilized their culture in comparative
isolation.

Despite being considered Indian, Cherán
seems to contain the potentialities for rapid
acculturation. Its essential economic patterns
will, so far as local productivity through agri-
culture or manufactures permit, facilitate fur-
ther economic development as the new highway

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- 177 stimulates increased commerce with other
 181 areas. Its essentially Spanish social patterns
 and its present proletariat consciousness and
 political sense seem to afford a ready basis for
 further assimilation of national culture through
 the informal means of outside contacts and the
 more formal means of governmental programs.
 Its strong Catholic background will pave the
 way for further Church influence. One cannot
 000 predict the future of such a community in
 detail, for it will depend partly upon national
 and even international developments as well as
 upon Cherán's reaction to them. General
 trends are now observable among comparable
 communities; and the work that the Institute
 of Social Anthropology is now carrying on in
 cooperation with the Escuela Nacional de An-
 tropología of Mexico among other Tarascan
 villages that have slightly different character-
 istics and degrees of acculturation and the
 Institute's studies in other parts of Latin
 America will yield data that will both clarify
 general trends and high-light local peculiarities.

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[22] Financial support for the field work came from two sources. The Board of Research of the University of California contributed materially to field expenses and to the preparation of the manuscript. In addition, a substantial amount was made available for field expenses by the Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas in México. Funds for a preliminary survey of the Tarascan area, which resulted in the selection of Cherán for study, were supplied by the Board of Research of the University of California and the Instituto Politécnico Nacional.

[12] The village of Cherán was chosen for several reasons. In the first place, it is the largest of the mountain Tarascan villages and consequently offered an advantageous opportunity for several people to work simultaneously. [17] Until about 1937 Cherán was also one of the most isolated of the mountain Tarascan towns.

[49] In that year the grade for the branch highway from the Guadalajara-Mexico City highway to Uruapan was established. Paving of this highway was completed in 1940, but little effect on Cherán had yet taken place. This situation offered an attractive opportunity for later investigation of the results of lessened isolation. Finally, Cherán is an almost wholly Indian town, a situation which is not true of most of the large mountain Tarascan settlements. Actually, in 1940 only a few families in Cherán did not regard themselves as Tarascan. The [17] non-Tarascan families were more or less transient and occupied a low position in the social scale; most of them were the flotsam left from [563] [12] the highway construction crews and had neither influence nor status in the town. The majority actually left the town during 1940.

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- 121 The exceptions were two storekeepers, both
177 from essentially Indian towns themselves, two
563 school teachers, a Federal tax collector, and the
town Secretary.

The field work in Cherán was a cooperative enterprise, involving the work of numerous assistants. Most important of these helpers was Thomas McCorkle, of Berkeley, Calif. His greatest contribution was in accumulating the endless amount of detail necessary to the economic study, although there is scarcely a section of the paper which does not make use of data collected by him. Dr. Emmanuel Palacios, of the Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas, is responsible for a great deal of the data on childbirth, infant care, midwifery, and medical practice in general. Sra. Silvia Rendón, of the Escuela Nacional de Antropología, worked particularly in the field of foods, but also contributed extensively on other topics, especially on matters dealing with women. She also supplied data from other towns, especially Angahuan, Capacuaro, and Chilchota. Sr. Pedro Carrasco R., of the Escuela Nacional de Antropología, worked primarily on housing. His major contributions are included in two other papers (Beals, Carrasco, and McCorkle, 1944; Beals and Carrasco, 1944), but he also provided miscellaneous notes from Cherán, Angahuan, Capacuaro, and Chilchota and some of the Lake Pátzcuaro towns. Some comparative notes from Patamban were collected by Ricardo Pozas, of the Escuela Nacional de Antropología, in the course of a study of pottery manufacture, the details of which are not included in this paper. Finally, some data were collected by Dorothy Beals and Margery McCorkle.

- 115 In addition to the foregoing, many persons in Cherán were of assistance. Throughout the entire period of the study two were especially helpful, Agustín Rangel and Pedro Chávez. The former, although a full-blooded Tarascan, had been born and educated in California. As a literate assistant he was extremely useful in many ways; for example, in searching the town archives and recording many important facts therefrom. Perhaps his most important service, however, was in providing an entrée into the homes of his almost innumerable relatives. Particularly to be mentioned are his parents,

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296 tensive labor, although the weavers usually do some housework also.

CLOTHING AND DRESS HABITS

294 *Clothing manufacture.*—Many persons make their own clothes, but a number of persons
 463 make clothes for sale or on order. Even men may make clothes for sale if the family owns a sewing machine. For example, one storekeeper makes men's cotton trousers (*calzones*) and men's shirts in his spare time, selling them in the store. His wife also sews but less frequently. Many storekeepers have one or more sewing machines—the largest number observed was three—which are rented to women who come to the store to sew. One ambitious family (whose sons were sent to Morelia to school) made much of the family income from the labor of mother and daughters. Most of the sewing is durable but not skilled. No one in the town
 [511] knows how to fit a garment, and as standards
 [177] approach those of the Mestizos, more and more
 [439] people buy ready-made garments from outside in stores, markets, or in Mestizo towns.

Most of the "tailors" are specialists, making only one type of garment. One woman makes only men's cotton trousers. She makes six pairs a day, double-stitched. Garments for weddings are single-stitched. The cloth is provided and cut by the customer. This woman works only intermittently on order. Trousers require about $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. of cloth. Men's shirts require about the same amount of material but cost more for sewing. One woman makes only aprons, while another makes only children's garments.

291 *Men's dress.*—Influence of the Mestizo world
 177 is strongly evident in men's dress. Yet, aside from the priest, no resident of the town dresses completely *catrin* (i.e., in city style) in Cherán, and only rarely do individuals going to Uruapan or some other town wear city dress. Many men, it is true, commonly wear one or more garments of "town" style. Coats, sweaters, and jackets are owned by many. Tailored woolen trousers, on the other hand, are rare, while almost none own complete suits. Ordinarily, the cotton trousers of the Mestizo countryman rather than woolen trousers replace the white *calzones* of the Indian.

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29/ The most prominent and significant change
 177 in men's dress in Cherán is not the entry of the
catrin garments of storekeeper and professional
 man of the towns, but of the blue denim jeans
 or overalls of the mechanic and factory worker,
 the garment of the proletariat. As the controlling
 [665] group in town is allied to the Partido
 Revolucionario Mexicano and the Confederacion
 de Trabajadores Mexicanas, the town officials,
 including mayor and secretary, often wear over-
 [292]alls, reserving their *catrin* clothes for visits to
 Uruapan or Morelia or for important civic
 events.

29/ The working dress of Cherán males, and the
 exclusive dress of many, is trousers (*calzones*),
 shirt or blouse of unbleached muslin (*manta*),
 straw hat, and sandals (*guaraches*). A blanket
 or poncho (*serape*) is worn or carried as protection
 against cold or rain (pls. 3; 4, lower
 right).

The *calzones* or trousers are tight-fitting in
 the legs but cut full at the waist with a baggy
 seat. There are no buttons on the fly; instead
 of a fastening, the two ample sides of the fly
 are lapped over each other, and a sash, about
 6 inches in width, is wrapped about the waist
 to hold the trousers. The lower part of the
 trouser leg has a piece of cloth tape attached
 which is used to tie the bottom of the *calzones*
 tightly around the ankle. The shirt, or more
 properly, blouse, likewise has no buttons. It
 usually has no tails, or very abbreviated ones,
 and is usually worn outside the *calzones*. It is
 open part way down the front and has a roll
 collar, but neither opening nor collar ordinarily
 is fastened. Buttons are never used, except in
 attempts to copy city garments, but strings may
 be provided. Such fitting as is attempted is
 badly done. A coat of *manta* may also be worn
 on special occasions; it differs from the blouse
 primarily in being open down the front and in
 being of heavier material. It may also be
 stitched in bright-colored thread.

[177] Both shirt and coat may be modified by attempt
 to copy urban models and sometimes are
 purchased ready-made.

Sandals or *guaraches* have a heavy pointed
 double thick leather sole and leather heel. Part
 of the top is of leather pieces nailed to the sole,
 but the major portion is made of woven leather
 strips passing through slits in the upper sole

262 With *čurípo*, the *kurúnda* is one of the most
252 typical of Tarascan dishes.¹⁰

There are various forms of the *kurúnda*, which are eaten on special occasions. The details follow.

Atápakwa kurúnda.—*Atápakwa* is a sauce made of any kind of chile, cooked, toasted, or raw. This is ground with green tomatoes, garlic, and onion, and seasoned with salt. Fresh or dried cheese, finely broken up, may be added. The regular *kurúnda* is simply dipped in the sauce as it is eaten. This dish may be served at any time, but it is most frequently used when men come home to lunch from the fields or on other occasions in the middle of the day when the family do not ordinarily have a midday meal.

Agwákata kurúnda.—Beans of any sort are cooked and ground. They are placed in layers alternating with layers of *nixtamal* until a thick cake is formed. This is wrapped in maize leaves and steamed. *Agwákata kurúndas* are made primarily at the time of the bean harvest (Cherán grows few beans) and are eaten at any of the main meals. They may also be given to children between meals.

Nákatamal.—This is a tamale made with maize dough filled with meat and chile sauce. Beef is commonly used, although pork may also be employed. The meat is boiled in water and cut in small pieces without bones. It is then mixed with a chile sauce made of the dry chile known as *pasiya*, which is cooked in water and ground with tomatoes, garlic, and onions. These tamales are not wrapped in maize leaves but in dry maize husks soaked in water. A small quantity of dough is spread over the leaf and on this is placed a small quantity of meat and sauce. The leaf is then doubled over and the tamale cooked in boiling water. The *nákatamal* must be small in size to be properly made. The name and the type suggest it is of (17) Valley of Mexico origin. It is ordinarily made 769 only for the fiestas of the dead on the 1st and 252 2d of November, although it was served to me 262 once on an ordinary occasion. It forms a part of the offerings made to the dead and is also eaten in the graveyard by the mourners and

¹⁰ In *Paricotin kurúnda* means "corn husks." *Kurunduráni* means "to wrap tamales in maize leaves."

184 first, then the men, and then the married
264 women. When in the fields or woods, Chilchota
men make the fire, heat the food, and serve the
women. However, they always turn the tor-
tillas on the fire with long sticks; turning the
tortillas with the fingers would be womanish.

262 Changes in food habits at Cherán probably
178 have been marked in recent years. Old people
say that "anciently" the major diet was cabbage
and tamales. Lard was disliked so much that
people could not eat it. Although the change
in Cherán is attributed to the highway and the
entry of Mestizos, probably the large-scale
migration from Cherán to other places had
much to do with the change. Although it is
difficult to point out specific changes without
comparative data from conservative towns, the
major differences seem to be the displacement
of tamales by tortillas and the eating of fiesta
foods on ordinary occasions. Soft drinks,
cookies, and other manufactured foods are also
becoming more common.

ECONOMICS

437 changes on a barter basis are often calculated
in terms of the money values of the goods or
services involved.

437 The fact that Tarascan economy is a money
economy signifies more than ease in the study
177 of exchange; it also indicates at once that
Tarascan economy is far from primitive as that
term is usually understood. Actually Tara-
scan economics, like the rest of Tarascan cul-
ture, is strongly influenced by European cul-
ture. It does not necessarily follow, however,
[181] that Tarascan economics is not distinctive.
The long period of assimilation and reintegration
that characterized all of Tarascan culture
occurred also in the economic field, and the
result is a hybrid. Nevertheless, Tarascan
culture is more European in origin than is that
of most Mexican Indian groups. Moreover,
especially in recent years, the economy of the
outside world has impinged increasingly upon
the Tarascans so that in 1940 there were indi-
viduals whose livelihood had been seriously
affected by the outbreak of war and who, fur-
thermore, were quite aware of their relation-
ship to world markets.

435 exceptions, it may perhaps fairly be said that prices are the expression of Cherán values with respect to goods and services. Moreover, the major price determination at Cherán is not by local standards but in terms of fluctuations in Mexican economy as a whole. It is not supply and demand in Cherán which determines most prices, but supply and demand (and Government controls) in the surrounding regions. The extent to which this is true is a measure [177] of the degree to which Tarascan economy is linked with that of Mexico, a relationship that is much closer than is ordinarily recognized by Mexican students.

The prices of the most important commodities produced in Cherán, corn and wheat, are determined by what will be paid by purchasers from outside the town. In similar fashion, the prices of most imported goods are determined by the wholesale prices existing in centers such as Uruapan, Purépero, and Pátzcuaro. The price of labor is likewise determined, although to a somewhat lesser degree, by the price labor can command in markets outside of Tarascan territory.

[465] It is interesting to observe, however, that this influence does not extend far out of Michoacán. The Government, in building the highway with local labor, is reported to have paid only a peso a day, somewhat less than the legal minimum wage. As it was, the high wages (by Michoacán standards) tended to disrupt the local wage structure.

Within this major framework of price determination, of course, there are subsidiary exceptions. The price of pears, for example, will fluctuate somewhat in relation to local supply and demand, and the same is true of other fruits which have not yet found wider markets. Similar conditions obtain with respect to cheese and fish. Land prices in general seem to bear little relation to productivity and yield, although here our analysis may be at fault.²⁰ The preference for exercising gleanings rights in the corn harvest in place of higher wages also shows that in some areas of Cherán economics, nonmonetary values operate.

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178
494 In general, the coming of the highway is bringing higher prices for local products.

²⁰It is possible that a more adequate analysis of labor costs might show our estimates of net yields from farming are too high.

454 accumulated a substantial contribution without
358 feeling the drain on their finances. In this way
the priest accumulated enough money to rebuild
the altar and the choir loft as well as make
other improvements.

454 This procedure would have amounted to little
more than a clever money-making scheme had
not the priest projected it much more deeply
into Cherán life. At the same time he gave the
pig banks to the adults, he gave smaller banks
to all the children. The children he instructed,
not to save money for the church, as one might
expect, but to accumulate their centavos so that
when a fiesta came along they would have
money to buy what they wanted and have a
good time. The result of this procedure was
that today the majority of Cherán residents,
both adults and children, each has his bank, in
which he accumulates small change, and the
habit of saving, usually for some specific end,
has become quite common in the town. A
regular part of the pottery stocks brought to
Cherán at fiestas are pottery banks, now made
not only in the shape of pigs but in the shape of
many other animals, with a frequent touch of
the fantasy and caricature which characterize
Tarascan modeled pottery.³³

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THE PRIEST AND THE CHURCH ORGANIZATION

793 The priest, of course, is appointed by the
Bishop in Zamora. At the time the study
began, the resident priest had been some years
in Cherán and evidently was popular and well-
liked. Shortly afterward he was transferred
to another parish, and considerable efforts were
made to persuade the Bishop to change his
mind about the appointment. A petition was
also circulated and taken to the Bishop. Con-
siderable feeling was generated by the Bishop's
adamant stand on the matter, and for several
weeks no request was made for a new priest in
hopes of getting a return of the former priest.
When the old priest returned for a visit and to
settle some business affairs, the entrance to the
residence was ornamented with flowers and pine

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³³ The pig bank, as is well known, was introduced to Mexico by the wife of the late Ambassador Morrow. Those interested in making anthropology a predictive science might well be somewhat embarrassed by the devious, even fantastic, route by which the pig bank and the savings idea were transmitted to Cherán and became a part of Cherán culture.

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Sierra Tarascans

794 these men illustrates the situation clearly, particularly as it came to a head in 1940. That
578 the informant had no violent anti-Church sentiments is indicated by the fact that he previously deprecated the rumors that a school was to be established, pointing out that it would merely be a sort of religious seminary primarily for the girls, who were not being sent to school in Cherán anyway. His statement was as follows:

793 The priest (referring to the new priest in 1940) is
578 entering into political matters and speaks from the
794 pulpit about them. In the meetings which he calls, he speaks much more directly. In one which I attended, he said he was sent to put himself in front of the people to guide them on the road they should follow. No one, he said, could molest him nor interfere with him. Even though there were some misguided persons in the town who spoke against him, he would not permit them to prevent his arriving at his ends, and if it proved necessary, he himself knew how to manage pistol and rifle and knew how to fight in the forefront of his people for their rights.

This speech was received with great enthusiasm and applause and I had to remain silent. That is one of the unfortunate things here that no one can say anything against the priest or practically the whole town turns against him. As the people have always the idea that the priest is a sacred person and that a town without a priest is not a town with a complete life, the priest has only to say that a certain person is against him and the whole town will attack the person.

I believe that this priest is very disruptive (may divisionista) for the town. He wears his clerical garb in the town very proudly, receiving homage in the streets, a thing that the priests have not done before. The priest who left here was somewhat that way when he arrived, but when, as a friend, I indicated to him that he had spoken of political matters from the pulpit, he said it was a slip which he would not repeat. With the old priest one could speak reasonably about anything and discuss the affairs of the town and the attitude he should take, but with this one it is impossible to say anything. He will not permit the slightest criticism.

578 Some of the minority faction in the town
177 who are inclined to be anticlerical are undoubtedly affected by their experiences in the
793 United States. A former mayor was very outspoken in his objections to the behavior of the local priests. Many of the priests, he said, are guilty of much opposition to the Government and especially to the schools. He asserted that the priests seem not to wish people to read and write and are responsible for many fathers not sending their children to school. For this reason there is much unnecessary ignorance in

578 the town. Continuing his remarks, the former
177 mayor also said that the priests seem not to
793 want people to understand the prayers and
rituals. He then went on to point out how
different conditions are in the United States,
where he had spent some years, and entered
into a discussion of the reasons for the
differences.

RELIGIOUS FIESTAS

527 The most important rituals and recreational
events at Cherán are the fiestas. They are not,
however, intimately connected today with the
Church. It might be fair to say that the saints'
days are the excuses for holding the major
fiestas. All the large fiestas are accompanied
by special Masses, but the extent of church
connection is perhaps less than that involved
in the *mayordomías*. Essentially, the fiestas
are secular events with religious overtones.
All the major fiestas are conducted by the
municipal authorities, rather than by the
church. They are important commercial events
in the town, especially the fiesta of the patron
saint. They also provide a great deal of enter-
tainment. In general, they offer occasions for
making the major purchases of the year, show-
ing hospitality, overdrinking, and for the excite-
ment of large crowds and release from routine.
Only a few people find the religious aspects of
importance, even though they may attend the
Mass.

In some towns the fiestas are in disrepute
and have been abolished. In Cherán there is
no opposition to the fiestas on religious grounds,
but primarily on grounds of drunkenness. As
one solid farmer remarked—

[185] The bad part of the fiestas is that people get so very
drunk; you have seen how the women become more
disorderly than any (I had not observed this as a
general thing, by any means). The worst is where the
fiesta is too large, as in Cheránástico, where three bands
are employed although the town is small. People there
have to pay 13 to 15 pesos per family. Also bad is
when *cargueros* have to pay the entire cost of the
fiestas. Here the fiesta costs only 1 or 2 pesos per
person (family).

Such views are unusual in Cherán and, except
for efforts to introduce such novelties as basket-
ball games, the progressive administration
takes pride in perpetuating the conduct of the
fiestas on a grand scale.

769 graveyard, people return home. Few people do any but the most necessary work on this day.

[822] Sometime during the day, either before going to the graveyard or after returning, most people hang strings of yellow flowers over the frames of the house doors. Yellow is regarded as the color of mourning still, as it is in many parts of Indian Mexico. In view of reports of more elaborate ceremonies in other Tarascan towns, it should be recorded that no one at Cherán spends the night in the cemetery.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PROBLEMS

121 significant manufacturing industry supplementing its agriculture. The second step would be an intensive but rapid survey of a large number of communities, perhaps by a trait-list technique, to discover the extent of local and regional variation. Quite possibly such a survey would reveal additional types of communities meriting study. For certain types of problems, of course, the marginal, more acculturated communities require study, but a fairly complete knowledge of typical Tarascan culture seems the first need.

● 177 The present study of Cherán reveals a number of points of considerable interest. Perhaps
181 the most striking fact about Cherán is the essentially European origin of most of the culture and the relatively small number of traits of native provenience. Most of the material culture of Cherán is probably European, although obviously some of the plants, including the major crop, maize, is native. Farming techniques, implements, housing, men's clothing (and possibly women's clothing) are Indian only to a slight degree. The economic specialization and trade patterns may be based upon aboriginal conditions, yet they are known to have been formalized by Europeans. Political and ceremonial organization are also European, although in part their origins represent Bishop Vasco de Quiroga's interpretation of Thomas More's "Utopia" (1923). The extensive *compadre* system is but an enlargement upon European ideas. The origin of the Tarascan wedding ceremony alone remains obscure and may have important native antecedents. Concepts of the supernatural,

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177 both in formal religion and in witchcraft, are
181 certainly almost wholly European.

Despite the European origins of Tarascan culture, it obviously represents something different from the European-originated Mestizo culture. Neither is it a mere survival of sixteenth century conditions. If Vasco de Quiroga or any other sixteenth century European were to return to Cherán, he no doubt would find it as strange as any lay visitor from modern European culture. Nor would this strangeness be wholly or even primarily due to the infiltration of later European ideas.

The uniqueness of Cherán culture, whether viewed from the standpoint of the sixteenth century or from that of today, lies in the extensive reworking of its European materials. For example, the *cabildo* system seems almost certainly related to the organization of the hospitals introduced by Quiroga, yet the good Bishop might have to do considerable research to recognize the relationship. Such reworking may be due to the patterning influence of native ideas rather than to a spontaneous evolution of a purely European culture in the partial isolation of the late Colonial period. The character of such things as family life and attitudes and the real educative forces affecting the thinking and personality of Cherán inhabitants may have been relatively unchanged, despite the modifications in material culture and social organization.

178 A subject meriting more thorough investigation
181 in Cherán is the persistence of the mixed culture of Cherán. The fierce attachment to *costumbres* is part of the acceptance of a way of life by most members of the community, even the most progressive. This attachment persists despite the fact that Cherán culture not only changes visibly but that such change is accepted and even desired by a large part of the population. The limits of acceptable change, however, need further definition. The impression of the staff of the present study is that change is accepted rather readily in those things relating to material welfare and perhaps health. Cherán residents are not averse to changes leading to more money, food, medical service (if it does not cost too much), or elements increasing comfort, such as a larger and better distributed water supply. The introduction of industries giving employment at

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NU34 Tarasco NU34

Pátzcuaro

- 121 relations, occupation, ethnic origin, or religious background. Social classes are the main segments of this type. Within the national culture, every local and class group has a distinctive subculture. The peasants often appear to be the group with the highest degree of cultural distinctiveness.

National culture and society can not be described only in terms of local and class groups. Both these groups are tied together by institutions (money, trade, property, education, government, law, religion), whose personnel does not always coincide either with local or class groups and which often, as in the case of money or law, are not really the culture of a group but rather an expression of the economic, social and political relations between the different segments of society.⁴

In applying this approach to the Tarascan scene, the following reasoning can be put forth:

There are a Mexican people and a Mexican culture. The social system under which this people lives is characterized by a division into social classes. Every class has cultural peculiarities, i.e., a class subculture. One (or several) of these classes are the peasants, people primarily engaged in the tilling of the soil. Correspondingly one could speak of a national peasant culture. Furthermore, these peasants live in rural settlements every one of which has a distinctive culture due to different native background and adaptations to local ecological and social conditions. In this sense every village can be said to have a local and class subculture, or folk culture for short.

- 177 Changes in the national cultures are the
178 sum total of changes in every subculture plus their interrelations. Some subcultures, however, change more rapidly, or their changes are more decisive than others in determining changes in the other subcultures. In our case, given the backwardness of the Tarascan peasants and their lesser integration into national life, their villages are neither the sources of initiative for change nor the places where changes in the national culture are prepared. The Tarascans hold no key economic position and have no control of political power. They are, rather, in the position of receiving influences from the rest of the nation, and the stimuli for change often come from the outside.

⁴ Steward, 1950, 115.

178 One might approach the question of
177 change from two points of view: first, how
local conditions lead to change, whether
or not this change is typical for the nation
at large, and how it ties itself up to changes
in the nation; second, how changes in the
national culture, originating in other re-
gions and among other classes, expand and
influence change in the Tarascan villages.
A combination of both factors explains cul-
tural change in the Tarascan communities.

121 In order to discuss the relation be-
tween folk and national cultures as seen
in a particular local subculture, some fur-
ther definition seems necessary. We desig-
nate as "folk" those culture traits and in-
stitutions which are peculiar to the local
culture and distinctive of it. These traits
and institutions usually respond to local
needs and conditions and we might im-
agine their survival (although of course in
modified form) if the local subculture were
suddenly isolated from the rest of the
world.

National traits are those which, in the
local subculture, appear as local manifesta-
tions of national institutions. They respond
to the need of the nation as a whole. If
the community were to become isolated,
these traits would disappear or radically
change their character.

121 In the following table the culture of
105 Tarascan villages is classified according to
this dichotomy:

FOLK	NATIONAL
<i>Economics</i>	
subsistence farming	production for the outside market
agricultural techniques	consumption of out- side goods
household crafts	
local markets	taxpayers
	use of national currency
	workers in outside farms
<i>Social and Political</i>	
family	local government as branch of national and state governments
local government as organization and rep- resentative of local in- terests	allegiance to national political parties
	legal system

[P.99]

NU34 Tarasco NU34

Páizcuaro

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FOLK

NATIONAL

Ideology and Religion

unorganized beliefs	official Church (town priest, mass, etc.)
ceremonies centering around economic and life cycle activities	acceptance of outside authority in questions of ideology (Church, School, etc.)
folk Catholicism	
witchcraft	rational point of view taught in schools
total belief in folklore	

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We might attempt a further distinction within the folk level between those traits and institutions which respond to purely local needs and could exist if all ties with the outside were cut (such as the family, certain beliefs, or techniques based on local resources) and those traits and institutions which are typical of the local subculture and represent a higher organization of local interests, but whose function is largely that of coping with life within the nation, and to a certain extent are branches of a national institution, like local government, folk Catholicism. In a discussion of Indian-Spanish acculturation this further division would probably be needed. In problems of present change, however, it has not appeared necessary.

[178] In the process of change going on in Tarascan peasant cultures we observe a tendency toward a leveling of cultural differences and toward a greater uniformity of national culture. Peasant subcultures change by evolving independently and/or by taking up the culture of the other social segments of the nation.

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In this sense we study a process of change which is the same as that which Redfield describes as a difference between a folk and an urban type of culture and society. We do not emphasize, however, the difference between folk and urban, equating as Redfield does⁵ folk to primitive, but rather we are interested in the relations between folk and urban as two different segments of our Western civilization characterized by subcultures which keep "primitive" cultural characteristics (mainly peasant). By folk culture we do not mean a modified definition of primitive but rather those subcultures within Western civilization which are basically organized around local institutions and still keep cultural distinctiveness in the manner of primitive cultures. These local groups are

5. Redfield, 1947.

178 and the native elements incorporated into
771 the local Catholic cult made up an important part of the local folk culture of each community.

• • •

171 That Michoacan followed the same general process as the rest of peasant Mexico is well attested in a number of sources. West's recent survey of the cultural geography of Michoacan includes colonial data on the economic aspects (population, agriculture, settlements, and handicrafts) which show that Michoacan developed along the same lines as the rest of Mexico.¹⁹ These economic aspects will be considered further, for many still survive into modern times. The politico-religious organization of colonial times will be discussed later.

THE DECLINE OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

177 Together with the patterning of Indian
423 communities after Spanish townships, the Spaniards introduced into Mexico private ownership of land. They acquired large estates (*haciendas*) which were worked with Negro or Indian labor and whose produce was primarily destined for the national or world market. These two types of land tenure, — communal property of village communities and private property of haciendas, — have been in conflict throughout the history of Mexico. This conflict began early in colonial times; it reached its climax with the almost complete destruction of the village communities at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present.

668 With Mexican independence began the
177 application of political and economic policies of liberalism, and greater decay of the village communities set in.

423 The Indians were no longer considered a special caste under a different system of law, but Mexican citizens with equal rights. Although Indian tribute was abolished, the Indians also lost the protections afforded by the *Leyes de Indias* to their autonomous government.²⁰ The most important blow to the Indian village community, though, was the loss of their economic foundation: communal ownership of land.

175 Three centuries after the Spanish conquest, the Church had become the largest
794 landowner of the country. The fight for
423 abolishing ownership of land held in mortmain by the church came to be the dominant fact in the nineteenth century history
668 of Mexico.

19. West, 1942.

20. Chávez Orozco, 1943, ch. 4.

175 up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This
 423 found its legal expression in the *Reforma*
 668 and subsequent laws aimed at suppressing
 648 communal property. The change, however,
 went at a different pace in different re-
 gions. Mexico, due to the diversity of its
 territory and population, is characterized
 by a very unequal development of its vari-
 ous regions, thus allowing different types
 of society and culture to live together even
 if connected and coordinated into a single
 nation. The political and legal changes
 of the late nineteenth century represent
 only the turning point at which this gen-
 eral trend of change became the dominant
 political issue and required expression in
 the nation's legal system.

175 In marginal regions, however, the land-
 423 holding village, regardless of how many
 changes in its organization were required,
 survived and held its own against the
 haciendas, in the same way as haciendas
 had been the dominant type of economy in
 parts of Mexico at the time when com-
 munal ownership of villages was recog-
 nized and protected by law. Consequently,
 in discussing the development of a particu-
 lar region like Michoacan, further inquiry
 is essential to determine to what extent
 and in what manner this national trend
 of change has taken place.

* * *

Private estates had been introduced into
 Michoacan by the Spaniards since the six-
 teenth and seventeenth centuries. They be-
 gan in northern Michoacan where the land
 was particularly suited for stock raising,
 and in the tierra caliente where they con-
 centrated on cattle and sugar cane. This is
 the area where the hacienda type of econ-
 omy predominated until the Revolution.

Information is available on the political-
 religious organization of Indian towns at
 the end of the eighteenth century (from
 around 1789) and will be discussed later
 (Chapter 3). In the economic scene, the
 impact of the haciendas on the holding
 villages was at that time already notice-
 able. Some of the haciendas, like La Gua-
 racha in the Zamora area and those on the
 southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, which
 after the Revolution were subject to land
 reforms and which are today on the edge
 of Tarascan-speaking territory, were al-
 ready in existence.

175 The villages in the northern and southern
 464 areas had to supplement their native econ-
 177 omy with work in neighboring haciendas.
 This seems to have been the main factor
 leading to the decline and final disappear-

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ance of native speech in those areas, a process which began in the late eighteenth century and was greatly accelerated after Independence.

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In central Michoacan, the Sierra and the Lake areas (except the southern shore), the land-holding villages predominated and were devoted mainly to agriculture and handicrafts.²⁴

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During the Porfirio Díaz period, the application of the Reforma Laws abolishing communal property, and the economic development of the country brought about further growth of the haciendas.

In Tzintzuntzan, the formerly communal lands were distributed among the villagers, and individual titles had been given by 1885. Between 1885 and 1902, a large part of the best agricultural land and most of the communal, non-agricultural lands were sold, legally or otherwise, to outsiders who, with these lands, established haciendas.²⁵

[311]
In the swamp of Zacapu, a company was formed at the end of the century in order to reclaim swamp land. Thus, several haciendas were established in a swamp, which had been the property of the neighboring Indian towns. At least one of these haciendas seems to have managed to acquire further land from the village of Tarejero.²⁶

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In many towns, however, the Indians resisted the operation of the Reforma laws during most of the nineteenth century.

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In 1902, the state legislature passed a law regarding the distribution of the property of extinct Indian communities (*Ley y reglamento sobre reparto de bienes de las extinguidas comunidades indígenas*, 18 de junio y 4 de julio 1902). It provided that the formerly communal land of the Indians could not be sold or mortgaged; that in order to distribute the land every town should appoint two representatives; that in case the state government did not approve of the town's choice of representatives it should appoint attorneys (*apoderados*); that the towns should entrust their land titles to the authorities; and that if the towns did not appoint representatives after a certain period of time the government would name the attorneys. In most cases it was the government which appointed the attorneys.

This procedure apparently was intended to keep the lands from being sold to non-Indians, but although the land of the villages was not sold outright, it was leased

24. West, 1942, 11-12.

25. Foster, 1942, 171-2.

26. Simpson, 1937, 494-6.

771 In the Introduction, concepts of folk and national culture were presented. In Mexican Indian cultures the most distinctive aspects of folk religion are to be found in what we might call unorganized religion, i. e., those beliefs and rituals calling only for private ceremonials which are not connected with the Church and related ceremonial groups; they usually center around technological or life cycle activities. For instance, agricultural rites or concepts of diseases and ways of curing them are fields where more folk culture, and also more pre-Spanish survivals, are found.

771 Among the Tarascans, their connection with national life, greater than that of other Indian groups, has meant greater acculturation to the national culture. Technological rites are almost non-existent. One finds only miscellaneous beliefs about cooking, the hearth, or the influence of the moon on plants. Only corn agriculture has a few more religious associations in the more conservative villages where idols are kept in the cornfield and candles are lighted to them. There are also a number of tales and beliefs about corn and the weather.

796 In the life cycle ceremonies the main religious aspects today are those of Catholicism (the sacraments). Only witchcraft and some concepts of disease form any significant part of the folk religion, although they are dominated by ideas about the saints and the Devil, and historically are of Spanish more than of Indian origin.

779 Unorganized (non-Church) religion is comparatively unimportant among the Tarascans. Most religion in the Tarascan culture has to be described in terms of the Church, a national (and international) institution with its own ideology, personnel, organization and particular interests. As it appears in Tarascan villages, there is a clear difference between national and folk components of religion. On the one hand are the priest and his connection to the hierarchy; and elements of the cult such as the sacraments, mass, rosary, etc., which follow the rules of the international Church. Other aspects of belief and ritual, on the other hand, though connected with those of the Church, are locally organized and peculiar to the local subculture. This is what we call folk Catholicism.

CONCLUSIONS

128 The arrangement followed in the presentation of this material was imposed by the nature of the data. Sources for the different periods or for the national or local scenes were unequal. Thus it was necessary to examine each topic separately (economics and politics, cult organization, ideology) as it changed during the period considered rather than to follow, through successive historical stages, all the topics of Tarascan culture under discussion. A presentation of the latter sort will be attempted in this summary of conclusions.

185 For a point of departure we took the folk culture of the Indian communities formed during the colonial period by a blend of Spanish and Indian cultures. This culture is typical of the colonial period but its basic elements often survived into much later times, and even to the present in marginal areas. These communities were integrated with the economy of Mexico by paying tribute (or taxes), by the market, and by providing laborers for enterprises outside the local community. A great degree of economic autonomy, however, provided in each town a basis for the distinctive folk culture. It was characterized by communal landownership, agricultural techniques based on local resources and requiring the cooperation of all the villagers, the importance of household crafts, little differentiation as to wealth among the villagers, and production, for the most part, for consumption within the village or for the local market.

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621 The local government organs were under the ultimate control of higher national authorities, but had a wide range of autonomy.

771 Catholicism, the state religion, was also the religion of the local community, and the priest was supported by the village with the sanction of the State. But an important part of religion was peculiar to the

[796] local folk culture: unorganized rites around technological and life cycle activities, and also what we call folk Catholicism, folk acts of the cult, mainly festivals to the saints. A number of officers sponsoring and organizing these festivals were closely connected with the local government. 794 Cult financing was provided for by the produce or communal property devoted to

114 by one or more of the authors included the following:

Sierra region:

Ahuirán
 Angahuan
 Aranza
 Capacuaro
 Charapan
 Cherán
 Cocucho
 Corupo
 Nahuatzen
 Nurió
 Paracho
 Parangaricutiro
 Parícutin
 Patamban
 Pomacuacán
 Quinseo
 San Felipe
 San Lorenzo
 Tarecuato
 Urapicho
 Zirosto

La Cañada:

Acachuén
 Carapan
 Chilchota
 Huáncito
 Ichán
 Santo Tomás
 Tacuro
 Tanaquillo
 Urén
 Zopoco

Lake Pátzcuaro:

Cucuchucho
 Huecorio
 Ihuatzio
 Janicho
 Jarácuaro
 Tecuena
 Tsentsénhuaro
 Tsintsuntsan
 Tsurumítaro
 Yunuán

[continued on p. 6b]

THE TARASCAN TOWN

361 Tarascan towns tend to be located on level, or relatively level ground. Exceptions are found only in a few villages located in the higher mountains such as Quinseo, Cocucho, and others. Ex-

[363] cept where the irregularities of the terrain prohibit, the towns are subdivided by streets forming rectangular blocks oriented approximately to the compass points (pl. 1, upper). This is undoubtedly a reflection of the Spanish origins of these

● [172] towns; in many of the settlements traditions of former locations still exist. The blocks are subdivided into lots, or *solares*, of quite variable size, which are used both as building sites and gardens. Usually, the lots are fenced, particularly on the side facing the street. Houses either may adjoin the street line or may be located well within the lot away from the street. In the center of the larger towns, structures are more apt to adjoin the street, but the doors of living quarters almost always open on the yard rather than the street.

In the Lake region, the fishing villages tend to be on the edge of the water. As a result, some [363] of the smaller villages, such as Tecuena and Yunuán, do not have streets but merely paths. Where the ground is very uneven, as at Janicho

[p. 6a] [continued bottom of page 6-b]

- 342 tiles. The other areas have abundant water, but the forests are distant. An exception is the Sierra town of Tarecuato, where, despite abundant forests and the relative scarcity of water, most of the houses are of adobe. In the Sierra it is also becoming increasingly difficult to secure materials for large houses. This fact, together with Mestizo influence, probably is contributing to the spread of adobe, or stone-and-adobe construction.
- [17]

OF CHERÁN The Town of Cherán

- 361 The church, parish residence, school, and the municipal building all front on a central plaza. Except for benches and a fountain, the plaza is bare. Cement sidewalks and a surrounding paved area are contributions from the highway construction.

- 36 The width of the building lots varies from 10 or 12 feet (3 to 3.6 m.) to almost an entire block. 351 The depth in most cases is half that of the block, but in some cases it may be little more than 20 feet (6 m.). As a general rule, however, except in the center of town, the lot is large enough for a small garden, a few fruit trees, and at least a small area devoted to growing types of corn not ordinarily cultivated in the fields (fig. 2). The size of lots varies appreciably, though, in various sections of town. There is no general rule for placing the house upon the lot except in the center of town, where it usually abuts the street, especially if it is of adobe-and-masonry construction. If the house does not front on the street, a fence, generally of stone, is built along the street line. It usually is designed to keep out all animals including pigs, and customarily is above head height so passers-by may not peer over. The interior boundaries are also fenced, but the fences are often less substantial (pls. 2, lower; 3).

- 351 The lots are all owned individually. They may be bought or sold freely and may be subdivided in various ways. 423 A man with a large lot may sell a portion, creating two lots. Sometimes a man who may wish to enlarge his holdings will buy a strip from an adjoining lot or even the entire lot and merge the two pieces into a single lot. Heirs may also divide lots.

[p. 76]

342 in this plate, or may be pinned directly into
 335 sockets in the joists. The frame consists of a
 ridge pole supported by pillars from the walls and
 joists. The rafters are in pairs resting on the
 ridge pole. In large structures with tile roofs,
 additional pillars or braces may support the
 rafters (pl. 7, upper, right). The ends of the
 gable roof thus formed are usually closed with
 shakes. Sometimes a floor is laid over the joists
 to form a loft. Yet another common variant is a
 shake roof with four sheds similar to the roof of
 the "troje" (pl. 7, lower, left).

The wide eaves of this type of house usually
 extend to the edge of the sidewalk, a very con-
 venient arrangement in a rainy country, although
 the purpose probably is to keep moisture away
 from the walls. No other feature so strikingly
 sets off the architecture of central Michoacán from

that of the remainder of Mexico than do these
 wide eaves (pl. 8, left). Structures fronting on
 the plaza often have a corridor with supporting
 pillars.

342 Many structures of masonry and adobe brick
 are approximating Mexican architecture in their
 [177] ground plans, particularly if they are of any size.
 Usually two or more large rooms front on the
 street. A large entry way with double front
 doors, wide and high enough to permit the pas-
 sage of animals, usually will be between two of
 the rooms. On the side facing the inner yard,
 there is a wide earth or brick-floored veranda
 (fig. 14). Doors and windows may open on both
 the street and the yard. Floors of such structures

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FIGURE 19.—Representations of houses in the plates of the "Relación de Michoacán."

shelter). The roofs appear to be of straw or palm, in some cases with a very large comb or crest undoubtedly resulting from the manner of interweaving the palm at the ridge of the roof. In other cases, the roof is pyramidal or conical and is surmounted by something which may be an inverted pottery vessel. This is what may be referred to by Gilberti: "hucahtaiqua, un remate que se pone encima de la casa," and "chapitel de casa pajisa, hucahtaiqua."¹³ Verandas are depicted in the plates and references to them are made in the text.

342
 177 It is evident that modern houses do not correspond to those of the 16th century. Adobe walls may be pre-Hispanic, but the present methods of construction reveal Spanish influence.

¹³ Hucahtaiqua (in the alphabet of the "Consejo de Lengua Indígena" yáhhá(huwa) can be analyzed as "a thing placed on a summit."

342 Tiles are unquestionably Spanish in origin, and
 177 the architectural types of the Lake resemble
 Spanish types more than they do the illustrations of the "Relación de Michoacán."

342 Wooden houses are not mentioned in the
 127 "Relaciones geográficas" (fig. 20). Although the
cabeceras described in these Relaciones are not in the Sierra, part of their territories are in the Sierra and some subject villages were in the Sierra. For example, the "Relación de Peribán" says: "las casas deste dicho pueblo e sus sujetos son pequeños e de poco sustén e muy baxas, son cubiertas de paxa y los cimientos de piedra y las paredes de adobes e barro". Among the subject towns of Peribán were San Francisco, Atapan, Charapan, and San Lorenzo, all villages of the Sierra, as well as others not identifiable because the native name is not given, but which, from their description, are evidently in the Sierra.

The sole modern construction which might have been in existence in the 16th century is the *ámutakata*, for in Gilberti occurs "*tsirimba troje asentado en cuarto palos*." The houses of canes and poles (*tsirindacata* of Gilberti) may have been similar, in a general way, to some modern kitchens of a simple type or to shelters.

342 The principal historical problem is to determine whether the shake roof and the log wall
 177 with interlocking corners is of European or pre-Hispanic American origin. Both elements are
 171 well known in Europe and were introduced in North America, the interlocked log walls being brought by Swedish colonists to the Delaware River. In our case, information is scanty. We do not find references to log houses from before the Conquest or early Colonial times. As to the shakes, the question appears somewhat clearer. The Spanish and Tarascan words for shake (*tejamanil*, *tasamani*) are both derived from the Nautl *tlaxamanilli*, a descriptive word meaning "split thing." Nevertheless, shakes are known in Spain,¹⁴ and their Spanish origin in Mexico is confirmed by the Relación of 1581 on the Taxco region near Michoacán, stating that shakes were used as covering for Spaniards' houses, those of the Indians being thatched.¹⁵ A similar situation is found today in the Teotail region of

¹⁴ In shepherd's huts of the Basque country. *Anales del Museo de Pueblo Español*, vol. 1, p. 91, pl. 7. 1903.

¹⁵ *Papeles de Nueva España*, vol. 4, p. 262. Madrid, 1903.

342 Chiapas, where *ladinos* use tiles or shakes for their houses while Indians continue to use thatch.

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[177] It seems sound, then, to assume that shakes were introduced into Mexico by a small group of Spaniards, and that their use spread rapidly and intensely in wooded country. As shakes were probably unknown to a great part of the Spaniards, the Nautl descriptive word prevailed over the Spanish one.

342 The history of shakes and of interlocked log structures cannot, however, be resolved definitively without taking into account all the data from Middle America. At the present time, log structures are found among the Trique, Mixteca, and Mixe in Oaxaca; in the region between Perote and Jalapa, in the Sierra de Puebla; and among the Tepehuano and the Tarahumara. Shakes have a wider distribution.

343 The modern use of the Spanish word *troje* and the Tarascan *farimba* (in Angahuan) suggests that these were once granaries which have evolved into the modern wooden house. In the "Relación

[Continued on p. 36 b]

CONTEMPORARY TARASCAN HOUSING PROBLEMS

362 In the Introduction of this paper, a number of problems were discussed relating to the evaluation of Tarascan housing.

Although accurate determination of value standards for setting ideal goals for Tarascan houses is not pretended, some general conclusions seem possible. Tarascan houses are below the most desirable health standards from the standpoint of dryness, ventilation, protection from cold, and freedom from insects. In general, the wooden type of architecture is less damp and better ventilated. It is perhaps less warm, a deficiency compensated for by use of the fire in the kitchen, with the additional drawback, of course, of smoke irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract. There seems little to choose between the two types of construction from the standpoint of rodents and insects.

Economically, the masonry-adobe type of construction seems to be a little cheaper. For most Sierra Tarascans, however, this advantage is illusory and only holds for those who can afford to hire all the labor done. The masonry-adobe construction calls for the employment of specialists throughout. Most Sierra Tarascan males, on

[p. 36 a] [Continued bottom
of page 36 b]

343 de Michoacán" we read about *trojes* for storing
127 food, clothes, and idols, but no reference is made
to the shape or building materials of these *trojes*.
Probably we have here a precedent to the clear-cut
distinction between *troje* and *cocina* of the modern
Sierra Tarascan.

342 To summarize, we may conclude that the pre-
174 Hispanic houses were predominantly of adobe,
177 with thatched, four-shed roofs. The Spaniards
introduced tile roofs and modifications in the
architectural type. On the other hand, new iron
tools and building techniques (shakes and prob-
ably interlocking logs) favored the use of wood in
construction on a large scale. Although wooden
houses have their center of distribution in the
Sierra, they are still found in the regions of Urua-
pan, La Cañada, Lake Pátzcuaro, and elsewhere,
once having been much more common in those
districts. With timber becoming increasingly
scarce, adobe construction has virtually displaced
wood in the adjoining districts and is invading the
Sierra.

CONTEMPORARY TARASCAN HOUSING PROBLEMS

362 the other hand, are capable of doing a considerable
amount of the necessary work on a wooden struc-
ture. For those below the higher economic levels,
then, it is probable that wooden structures are
potentially less expensive than are those of
masonry and adobe. In other words, in terms of
the distribution of skills within the population,
wooden structures are more apt to produce ade-
quate housing if space be the main objective. It
should be observed, however, that this probably
is not true in many Lake and Cañada villages,
where access to timber is absent or difficult, but
skill in making adobe bricks is common.

As has been indicated, about 20 percent of the
population of Cherán is inadequately housed ac-
cording to Tarascan standards. For these, any
change in housing conditions quite obviously is
related to wider economic problems and conditions.
What of the other 80 percent according to ideal
standards? Until medical determination is made
of the proper amount of living space per person in
the Tarascan climate, no complete answer to this
question can be made. It can be asserted, how-
ever, that better housing is possible for most of
this 80 percent if two things could be accom-

[P. 11-b]

134 material and essential chemical elements, most
 [241] of these soils are cropped annually without fallow. A peculiar soil type, called *wirds*, occurs near the edge of a lava flow on the southwestern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, on Jarácuaro Island, and near Ihuatzio. The subsoil is a fibery-textured white clay (35.4 percent fine clay), from which the whitish-gray adobe bricks of Jarácuaro and Ihuatzio are made; the topsoil, when mixed with lacustrine deposits (as on Jarácuaro Island), forms a fertile loam extremely high in organic matter (nearly 5 percent) and calcium carbonate (7.7 percent). On the other hand, when the parent material lies close to the surface (as around Arcútin), the *wirds* is one of the poorest soils in the vicinity.¹⁵

¹⁵ A similar soil type occurs at the edge of a lava flow along the highway on the outskirts of Zacapu. The relation between vulcanism and the formation of *wirds* is not clear.

TARASCAN POPULATION

191 three inclusions of Matlaltzinca or Pirinda (Otomí
 563 stock): (1) the largest, near present Morelia, from Undameo northeast to Charo, (2) at Taimeo, southeast of Lake Cuitzeo, and (3) at Huetamo near the Balsas.¹⁷ Moreover, a group of Apaneca colonists lived at Guayameo, near Sirándaro on the Balsas, and an islet of Teco occurred between Tancitaro and Uruapan.¹⁸

161 Various factors contributed to the areal retrogression of Tarascans during the Spanish colonial and postcolonial periods. One factor was actual decrease of Indian population caused mainly by European diseases. The population of some

[161] areas was further weakened or depleted by migration of Tarascans as laborers to distant mining and agricultural centers. Moreover, Spanish and mulatto settlement within the indigenous area was a powerful force of hispanicization; wherever stock-raising estancias or sugar haciendas were established, native speech slowly disappeared. Conversely, in those areas shunned by Spanish settlers, Tarascan has been preserved to this day.

117 The most serious shock which the indigenous
 164 cultures suffered from Spanish contact was the
 161 frightful toll taken by the contagious European diseases that became epidemic throughout central

¹⁷ Data obtained from the following *Relaciones Geográficas* in *Mus. Nac.*, leg. 102: *Rel. de Necotlán* and *Rel. de Cuicatlan*, leg. 98, *Rel. de Charo Matlakalanga*.

¹⁸ *Mus. Nac.*, leg. 102, *Rel. de Sirándaro y Guayameo*; *Ponce Relación*, 1873, vol. 1, p. 131; *Mus. Nac.*, *Códe Géogr. Orozco*, vol. 1, *Rel. de Tancitaro*.

161 New Spain 1 year after the coming of Cortés.
164 Thereafter epidemics occurred periodically during
177 the colonial period, completely obliterating the
population of some districts, especially those in
the low, hot lands. Smallpox, measles, and
probably typhus (terétekua) were the most
common killers. Mendizábal (1939) has esti-
mated that in the first century of Spanish occupa-
tion the Indians of New Spain were reduced to 25
percent of their pre-Conquest numbers, and that
the pre-Spanish population of the diocese of
Michoacán was possibly 200,000, which was
reduced to some 92,000 by 1550.¹⁹ Judging from
the accounts in the Relaciones Geográficas of
1579-81, the basins of the Balsas and Tepalcatepec
suffered the most heavily. There from one-third
to all of the inhabitants of some villages were
destroyed. Accounts of the 16th and 17th
centuries mention scores of villages in the Taras-
can area which are now nonexistent, the inhabi-

¹⁹ Mendizábal made this calculation from figures given in the *Suma de Visitas*, ca. 1540 (Paseo y Trencoso, 1906, vol. 1).

[P. 12-C]

161
 177 tants having been wiped out entirely, or the few
 [164] survivors having migrated later to larger towns.

Spanish exploitation and settlement in Michoacán slowly effected the reduction of Tarascan speech. Guzman's *entrada* (1530) left a trail of destruction and displacement of population throughout northern Michoacán. Moreover, during the exploitation of placer gold along the tributaries of the Balsas and Tepalcatepec (1524-35) Spanish miners destroyed and dislocated many Tarascans through enslavement and overwork.²⁰

797 On the other hand, Franciscan and Augustinian
 177 missionaries, who by the end of the 16th century
 191 had established themselves in most of the large
 Tarascan pueblos, were strong agents of acculturation, replacing many indigenous material and

²⁰ The *Indice de Protocolos*, vol. 1 (ed. Millares Carlo and Mantecón), gives abundant evidence of the feverish gold panning operations in the Balsas and Tepalcatepec drainages from 1534 to 1538 and cites the wholesale use of Indian slave labor. Such activity probably continued until the enforcement (in the 1540's) of the New Laws, which forbade slave labor and consequently decreased the profitability of gold washing. Furthermore, many Spanish adventurers turned from gold panning to silver mining after the discoveries in the Tasco district during the 1530's.

[TEXT Continues TOP OF P. 13A]

CP. 13-d]

177 nonmaterial elements with European; but by per-
 797 forming religious functions in Tarascan, they
 191 helped to preserve, rather than destroy, the
 native tongue. Nor did the absentee *encomen-*
 [65] *dero*, who held villages in fee in order to collect
 monthly or yearly tribute, disturb the native
 speech.

177 The permanent European settlements (mines,
 191 farming, and livestock enterprises) which de-
 manded indigenous labor were the more important
 464 agents in substituting Spanish for the native
 167 language. *Repartimiento* labor from northern
 566 Tarasca was sent to the large silver mines in the
 east (Tlalpujahua, Sultepec, Temascaltepec, Zacu-
 alpan, Taxco) and in the north (Guanajuato);
 few pueblos in the Sierra furnished workers for
 these mines.²¹ Such labor worked in the mines
 only for 1- or 2-week periods, and although the
 workers probably picked up some Spanish in
 contact with mulattoes and mestizos, they con-
 tinued to use their native tongue. Free Tarascan
 laborers, however, migrated from their villages
 to distant northern mines (Zacatecas, Parral,
 San Luis Potosí) where they permanently settled
 in native quarters and eventually lost the use
 of their aboriginal language.

191 Spanish settlements within the Tarascan area
 177 contributed more than any other factor to the loss
 of the native tongue. Such settlement occurred
 during the 16th and 17th centuries in those lands
 peripheral to the Sierra, i. e., in the grassy plains
 and hill country to the north and east and in the
tierras templada and *caliente* to the south. In both
 areas the basis of permanent Spanish settlement
 was stock raising. The northern section from the
 Otomí country near the Sierra de Ozumatlán to
 Mazamitla, south of Lake Chapala, was especially
 favorable for cattle and sheep. Large expanses
 of grass and scrub existed between widely scat-
 tered native villages; numerous springs and
 streams afforded sufficient water; while salt licks
 were common near mineral springs and in small
playas. Moreover, year-round pasture occurred
 along the margins of lakes and marshes throughout
 the northern region. During the colonial period
 thousands of sheep and cattle were pastured in
 the dry season around Lake Cuitzeo, around the
 margins of the *ciénaga* of Zacapu, and in the

²¹ Arzusa, Savins, and Tzintzuntzan were the Sierra and Lake pueblos
 that supplied most of the *repartimiento* mine labor from the central part of
 the Tarascan area during the 16th century. During the 18th and 19th cen-
 turies most of the men of Zacán worked voluntarily in the Guanajuato mines.
 (Zavala and Castello, 1939-46, vol. 4, pp. 429-437; vol. 6, p. 488; AGN Historia,
 vol. 73, f. 356).

[P. 13-b]

177 Lerma delta plain at the eastern end of Lake
191 Chapala.²²

In the north, land was granted and cattle *estancias* were established soon after the voluntary submission of the Tarascan chiefs in 1522. By 1540 most of the best pastures between Lake Cuitzeo and Lake Chapala were in the hands of Spanish ranchers (Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, pp. 76, 77, 117, etc.), and by 1600 most of northern Tarasca was taken up by cattle and sheep ranches, forming the southern part of the great colonial ranching area of north-central Mexico. In well-watered spots Spaniards also established

[464] irrigated wheat farms, worked by *repartimiento* labor from Tarascan villages nearby, e. g. around Chilchota and Indaparapeo (Mus. Nac., leg. 102, Rel. de Chilchota, 1581; Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, pp. 78, 133).

These Spanish settlements, located between
[164] Indian pueblos, were centers of acculturation for natives who came to work permanently as herdsmen or farmers. Associating with mulatto and Negro cattle hands (who became numerous in Michoacán during the 17th and 18th centuries), Indians gradually lost their Tarascan speech and intermarried with the invading element, begetting mixed offspring. Spanish and mulatto families also established households in many reorganized Indian pueblos (e. g. Cuitzeo, Indaparapeo, Chilchota, etc.), the Indian population being relegated to *barrios*, or native quarters in the town. There, too, acculturation took place. Furthermore, at least two Spanish towns were founded in the northern area—Valladolid (Morelia) and Zamora—in both of which were established
[166] *barrios* for Indians who came to live as laborers and traders.

In spite of active Spanish and mulatto settlement in the North, the loss of native speech was slow. By the mid-18th century Tarascan-speaking folk comprised between 50 and 75 percent of the total population in the northern plateau of Michoacán, and many pueblos were still entirely native in speech²³ (map 8). These percentages

²² The pastures of the lower Lerma were famed throughout New Spain for their abundant winter forage. During the 16th and 17th centuries thousands of sheep were annually driven there from Querétaro, Toluca, the Valley of Mexico, and other distant places. (Mus. Nac. (Col. Gómez Orozco), Rel. de Querétaro; Ponco Relación, 1872, vol. 2, p. 14; Arregul, 1944, p. 60.)

[127] ²³ The language maps (8 and 9) were compiled chiefly from church *padrones*, or lists of confessors of each inhabited place in the diocese of Michoacán. Such lists are extant in the Archivo del Arzobispado de Michoacán (AAM), Morelia. *Padrones* for 1742, 1746, and 1750, plus population and linguistic information from Villaseñor y Sánchez: *Theatro Americano*, 1746-48, were employed to construct the map for 1750. For that of 1900 the writer used *padrones* for 1706, 1800, 1801, 1805, 1808, and 1810. Information for the latter map was much less complete than for the former.

[P. 142]

191 were probably even larger prior to 1737, the year
 177 of a disastrous smallpox epidemic. Certain areas,
 however, particularly the pastures of the ever-
 green marshes (the lower Lerma, the Zacapu
 district, the Zamora Valley), were mainly Spanish
 in speech. By 1600 the northern boundary of
 Tarascan had moved north into the Bajío of
 Guanajuato, where Spanish wheat farms and
 [166] stock ranches had attracted large numbers of
 native workers from the southern pueblos (Zavala
 and Castello, 1939-46, vol. 5, p. 30). In the north-
 [563] western sector a reemergent Mexican (Teco) speech
 had replaced Tarascan (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff.
 192-210; 212-226), while in the northeast and east
 Mazahua and Matlaltzinca were encroaching
 farther into Tarascan territory. The islands of
 Matlaltzinca east and southwest of Valladolid still
 held, but that of Huetamo had probably disap-
 peared (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 139).

By 1800 (map 9) the percentage of Tarascan-
 191 speaking folk in the northern area had decreased
 notably, especially along the frontiers. The
 177 Matlaltzinca-Tarascan area of Charo-Zinapécuaro
 [563] was still largely indigenous, and a zone from Cerro
 el Zirate northward to Lake Cuitzeo contained a
 large proportion of native speech. Fifty years
 later (map 10)²⁴ the Tarascan-speaking people
 had been reduced to small isolated islands, partly
 a result of frequent military and political upheav-
 als following the struggle for independence. In
 1940 (map 11), after nearly 100 years of inter-
 mittent political turmoil, Tarascan speech had
 disappeared from the northern grasslands, except
 for a few resistant pueblos on the northern edge
 of the Sierra. After a slow weakening in the
 colonial period, the native language in the North
 gradually collapsed during the last 150 years.

563 The western area.—Immediately west of the
 191 Sierra lies a southward prong of the northern
 plateau landscape, which, like the North, was
 177 early settled by whites and mulattoes. At the
 beginning of the 17th century the large graben
 valley of Cotija was occupied by cattle estancias,
 and the settlement of Cotija was composed en-
 tirely of Spanish blood. As late as 1800 this
 valley, except its eastern end, was an island of
 Spaniards and some mulattoes and mestizos sur-

[127] ²⁴ Population statistics were not available to construct an isopleth map
 for 1800. Approximate boundaries of Tarascan speech were compiled from
 various mid-19th century reports: "Noticia general de los terrenos de comu-
 nidad de indigenas del Estado", in *Memoria de la Legislatura de Michoacán*
 (1869); AAM, siglo XIX, leg. 797, *Memorias estadísticas . . . 1841, Listas*
de los cabeceras de curato . . . 1845; Orusco y Barra, 1884, pp. 371-373;
Rosero, 1882.

[P. 14-b]

563 rounded by Tarascans. A few Spanish ranchers
 177 and traders settled also in Tingüindín, a large
 191 Indian village at the western edge of the Sierra; but
 the extreme western Tarascan zone from Mazamitla to Los Reyes did not completely lose its native speech until the beginning of the present century.

[164] The *tierra caliente* and *tierra templada*.—The story of the recession of Tarascan speech in the *tierra caliente* roughly parallels that in the northern plateau. In the former area disease probably decimated the native population more completely than in the north, and its Europeanization was consequently more rapid. After the period of gold panning in the southern tributaries of the Tepalcatepec and Balsas Rivers, the Spaniards turned to cattle ranching in the tropical bush around Cutzamala, Pungarabato, and Huetamo in the Balsas Basin and near Apatzingán and Tomatlán in the Tepalcatepec lowland. Although the tropical grasses and shrubs were less nourishing than those in the northern plateau, the *tierra caliente* was favored by abundant springs and streams. As in the north, the natives rapidly became *vagueros* and mixed with the mulattoes and Negroes on the ranches. Moreover, during the last decades of the 16th century Spaniards began to establish sugar plantations and mills in the upper limits of the *tierra caliente*.²³ The mill settlements (*trapiches*, *ingenios*), like the cattle ranches, were centers of acculturation and miscegenation. Large groups of Negro and mulatto slaves, male and female, were imported to operate the *trapiches* (according to colonial law, Indians were exempt from mill labor), while Tarascan [464] forced and free workers planted and harvested cane in fields nearby. Race mixing and gradual loss of native speech was inevitable. Again, exploitation of the copper mines of the *tierra caliente* 191 and the establishment of smelting centers in [172] Tzatzio and Santa Clara was another activity which helped acculturation and hastened the loss of the aboriginal language. In 1750 the limits of Tarascan speech still coincided with the 16th century pre-Spanish boundaries, but in some areas, such as the Tepalcatepec Basin, the percentage of inhabitants speaking Tarascan was only 25 percent of the total. In the *tierra templada* sugar-growing districts south of Zitácuaro, in the Peribán Valley, and the upper escarpment zone around Ario and Tacámbaro, the ratio of

²³ In 1540 a sugar mill had been established in Taximaroa, on the plateau above Tuxpan (Paso y Troncoso, 1904, vol. 1, p. 203).

[Text continues TOP of P. 172--Analysis]

[P. 17-a]

191 Tarascan to Spanish was also low. Only one isolated area of solid native speech existed north-east of Apatzingán (the fruit-growing villages of Acahuato and Parácuaro). The 18th-century population figures for the sparsely inhabited, highly dissected hot country south of Morelia are not extant, but it was probably entirely Tarascan in language. In 50 years percentages of native speech had decreased, but the outer limits of the language remained practically unchanged. In 1850, however, only scattered islands of indigenous speech remained: along the Balsas at the southeastern extremity of the old Tarascan area (Tanganhuato, Pungarabato); a disjunct arc extending from the Balsas northeast to near Zitácuaro (San Nicolás, Purechuchio, Cutzeo, Pungeo, Tiquicheo, Tuzantla, and Susupuato); the Acahuato-Parácuaro district; and, the pueblo of San Juan de los Plátanos, west of Apatzingán (map 10). By 1940 Tarascan speech in the *tierra caliente* had entirely disappeared; only the small fruit town, San Angel Zurumucapio, represented the last remnant of Tarascan speech in the *tierra templada*. Again, as in the northern plateau, the sudden collapse of native speech in the south came in the first half of the 19th century. There, the Tarascans have lost most heavily territorially, for the hot country, although a colonial area and probably lightly held in terms of population, comprised more than half of the old empire.

The present distribution of Tarascan speech is confined mainly to the *tierra fría*—Lake Pátzcuaro and the Sierra. These regions, together with La Cañada, appear to be a resistant core in which the Tarascans are making a last stand against complete loss of their native tongue. In the maps of 1750, 1800, and 1850 these regions stand out as the only large purely indigenous part of Tarasca. The failure of Spaniards and their mulatto laborers to settle in the Sierra and in some sections of the Lake district cannot be attributed to inaccessibility, for those areas are open country with few impediments to horse travel.²² The Sierra was simply unattractive to Spanish exploitation. Neither it nor the Lake area contained mineral wealth. The pine-oak forests, with little palatable grass and numerous predatory animals, offered few attractions for the stockman.

[437] ²² The *camino real* from México to Nueva Galicia, via Pátzcuaro, traversed the center of the Sierra, passing through Pichátaro, Sevina, Nahuatzen, Cherán, and Chilchota.

[P. 17-b]

191- Nor was the region's winter climate an induce-
 177- ment.²⁷ The religious had penetrated all Indian settlements in the Sierra and Lake areas; every pueblo was under an absentee *encomendero* to whom tributes in money, grain, or handicrafts were paid periodically. But the Indians had little contact with the Spanish tongue. By 1750, however, some Spanish families, probably traders, had settled in a few Sierra market towns (Patamban, Paracho, Nahuatzen, Corupo), and in 1800 the towns of Charapan and Parangaricutiro also contained one or two Spanish families.²⁸ A large part of the inhabitants of those pueblos today speak only Castilian (map 12). After independence in 1822, a few Spaniards or mestizos established agricultural settlements on the Sierra, e. g. the *ranchito* of Arato, now a pueblo 10 km. west of Paracho.

361 Although the Tarascan area first to harbor
 194 Spaniards was the Lake region (Pátzcuaro, Tzintzuntzan), some of its pueblos have succeeded in
 177 preserving the native tongue. Such towns are located on the islands and in isolated positions on the shore (northwestern edge of the lake, and the Taríu-k'éri Peninsula). By 1750 numerous Spanish haciendas and mestizo *ranchos* existed along the southern, southwestern, and northeastern borders of the lake. Cocupao (modern Quiroga), Tzintzuntzan, and Erongaricutiro at that time were approximately 50 percent Spanish-speaking, and the city of Pátzcuaro, the colonial administrative and economic center of the Lake area, was less than 25 percent Tarascan in speech. Today the language of the former colonial hacienda districts around the lake is completely nonindigenous. These include the entire southern shore, the northeastern section, and many points along the western border.

191 The history of the southern shore represents a
 177 typical example of the influence of haciendas on the hispanicization of native populations. By the mid-18th century large Spanish holdings had enveloped most of the native pueblos, contrary to laws which insured Indians a block of land (for

²⁷ The Sierra's unattractiveness to Spanish settlement is aptly described by the Franciscan friar, Diego Muñoz, writing in 1603 on the cultivated land near Capacuaro: "... y no son tierras para mas que yndios criados allí que las tienen curados y experimentados; que espantan las aperturas poco por ser temple riguroso al mas frío de mechoacan acercandole el ayre casso ordinario de ahuido viento y delgado y la gerua es aspera, y útil para ganado." (AGN Congregaciones, f. 14).

²⁸ AAM, siglo XVIII, leg. 233 (1746); leg. 277 (1750). In 1796, 19 *gratos* de *razón* lived in Charapan, 6 in Parangaricutiro, 40 in Corupo (AAM siglo XIX, leg. 175).

[P. 18a]

- 191 buildings) measuring 600 yards (*varas*) in each cardinal direction from the village church. Deprived of land, most of the men of the pueblos sought work in the sugar plantations in the *tierra templada* around Ario and Tacámbaro, returning only occasionally to their homes. Others became peons in the adjacent haciendas, working with mulatto and mestizo labor (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 292-306). Consequently, the decreased use and subsequent loss of the native language was inevitable. Only the fishers inhabiting the small Urandén Islands immediately offshore, who were unaffected by the haciendas, were able to preserve their native tongue.

MODERN LINGUISTIC DISTRIBUTIONS

- 191 The modern Tarascan area is in no sense a solid block of indigenous speech (table 1). The inhabitants of only 32 of the 66 Tarascan towns and 31 of the 50 indigenous *ranchos* all speak the native tongue (map 12). Nearly 25 percent of the population within the present area is composed of mestizos who know only Spanish. Such people are mainly merchants and *arrieros* living in most of the Indian pueblos and farmers inhabiting nonindigenous *ranchos* scattered throughout the Sierra and the Lake district. Fifty years ago native market centers, the towns of Nahuatzen and Tingambato now contain but a handful of people who have retained the indigenous language.

- [162] According to 1940 census figures, only 35 percent of the inhabitants of Patamban are Tarascan in speech, 38 percent of those of Parangaricutiro, 30 percent of those of Paracho, 20 percent of those of Sirosto, and 10 percent of those of Corupo.²³ Moreover, in 1940, 18 mestizo *ranchos* were scattered between Tarascan pueblos in the Sierra. In addition to mestizo merchants and farmers, many Spanish-speaking lumbermen inhabit the ephemeral sawmills prevalent in the Sierra forests. Hence, infiltrating mestizo settlement has shattered the once-continuous indigenous area in the Sierra and Lake district into small islets of purely Tarascan speech. The more notable of these islets are: (1) seven towns in La Cañada, (2) the pueblos and *ranchos* grouped around the flanks of Cerro de Patamban, (3) the Tarecuato district, (4) a string of villages east of Cerro de

²³ The percentage for Corupo is open to question. Although no actual statistical sampling was done, an impression of a much greater percentage of Tarascan-speaking inhabitants was obtained by the writer when he visited that town in 1944.

[P. 24-b]

161 appear. Such cultural changes—improved trans-
 191 portation, more frequent contact with modern
 191 life, increased educational facilities both within
 191 the pueblos and in the large towns outside, the
 177 Government alphabetization program—all aid
 to increase the use of Spanish and to decrease
 the use of Tarascan. Such factors influence espe-
 cially the younger generation. Today the young
 people (5 to 20 years old) of many pueblos have
 not learned Tarascan, and often those who know
 the language speak Spanish by preference. More-
 over, as indicated above, mestizo merchants are
 still moving into the Tarascan market towns and in
 such centers intermarriage of Indian and mestizo
 continues; the offspring of such unions rarely
 learn the indigenous tongue.

TARASCAN SETTLEMENTS

361 men from adjacent islands of Janitzio and Lo
 621 Pacanda. On the other hand, the mestizo
ranchos now found in the Sierra are the product
 of migration of farmers and political refugees from
 the outside. One of these, Arato, was established
 soon after the struggle for independence in 1810,
 and in the 1930's was given the title of pueblo
 with *tenencia* status.

Other types of settlement in modern Tarasca
 include the lumber camp (*aserradero*), an ephem-
 eral agglomeration of workmen's huts around the
 sawmill. Such settlements disappear after sur-
 rounding exploitable timber has been depleted.
 In 1946 there were but three lumber camps in the
 entire Sierra. In addition, a minor form of
 dispersed settlement is sometimes found in the
 Sierra; occasionally a woodcutter and his family
 live permanently in an isolated house on a forested
 mountain slope and visit the nearest pueblo only
 to market products, buy supplies, and attend
 fiestas.

361 **Settlement sites.**—The few available early
 descriptions of the Tarascan area indicate the
 existence of many more Indian settlements during
 the 16th century than at present.³³ This was
 particularly true in the Sierra, where small
 agglomerations (*estancias* or *rancherías*) were
 numerous. Such settlements were scattered on

³³ The early sources which mention former settlements in the Tarascan area include the available *Relaciones Geográficas*, 1579-81 (Mss. Nac., leg. 102); various late 16th-century documents concerning labor and associated problems in Zavala and Castello (1628-46); many documents concerning the congregations of 1586-1605 found in AGN *Congregaciones* and *Tierras*.

361 wooded mountain slopes (where maize could be easily cultivated with the digging stick) and on elevations difficult of access (chiefly for protection from Chichimec raids). Many of these *estancias* were likely wiped out by the early epidemics; others the Spaniards probably congregated with larger towns during the last half of the 16th and first years of the 17th centuries (Simpson, 1934; Spain—Law, Statutes, etc., 1681, ley VI, tit. 3), in order to better instruct natives in Christianity and to facilitate the collection of tribute and forced labor. Probably few present Tarascan pueblos possess their pre-Spanish sites.

[17] Modern Tarascan settlements occupy a variety of sites, most of which have level, or nearly level, surfaces. Those along Lake Pátzcuaro are on eminences or shelves above the water's edge; all avoid frequently flooded delta plains. In the Sierra many towns are located on slopes or benches immediately bordering the large basin plains; others occupy level spots in local swales. A few, such as Urapicho, Cocucho, Quinceo, and Ocu-

361 Plans of settlements.—The planning of pueblos and *rancherías* was unknown in pre-Columbian times. Settlements were amorphous, the dwellings irregularly spaced and connected by winding footpaths. Beginning around 1550, the Spaniards [177] slowly forced the natives in most parts of central Mexico to rebuild their towns on a grid street pattern, which is now predominant in most pueblos (Indian and mestizo) in Mexico.²⁴ The advantages of the grid, with numbered blocks and houses, are obvious in terms of tax and tribute records. Towns were also divided into *barrios* or wards, usually four or more; some *barrios* represent the congregation of outlying *rancherías* into the town. Within the Tarascan area the realignment of the street pattern was apparently continued until the close of the colonial period, for a late 18th-century description mentions the tortuous, unplanned paths and irregularly spaced houses of some Sierra pueblos, which today have the grid pattern (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 285-405). At the present time only the Tarascan *ranchos* (formed after the colonial period without direction from a centralized government) are characterized by winding streets and scattered dwellings, and probably illustrate the pattern of a pre-Conquest village (map 15).

One of the outstanding features of the grid pattern imposed by the Spaniards is the plaza, or square, located in the center of the settlement. Every Tarascan village has its plaza, which functions as the commercial, social, and administrative center of the town (map 16; pl. 2). A [367] semblance of a garden and often a bandstand occupy the center of the plaza. Administrative [344] buildings (the *palacio municipal* or *jefatura* and the jail), often the school, stores, and the dwellings of the more prominent citizens face the streets bordering the plaza. Moreover, the square is the site of religious and civil festivals and the market. [346] The church, however, rarely faces the plaza, but is often placed one-half to one block distant.

Away from the plaza, which in the larger towns is surrounded by a contiguous group of buildings, most Tarascan pueblos in the Sierra are characterized by widely spaced dwellings separated by house lots. Compact towns with contiguous building throughout occur in the Lake region and in the Zacapu Basin. (Maps 16, 17; pl. 2.)

[Text continues bottom P. 27b]

²⁴ For a discussion of the introduction of the grid street pattern into New Spain, see Stanislawski, 1947 b.

342 (2) Veracruz on the northern slopes of the Cofre
 171 de Perote; (3) the Sierra Madre Oriental between
 Apulco and Huayacocotla near the Hidalgo-
 Veracruz border and near the Pan American high-
 way northeast of Jacala, Hidalgo; (4) the Sierra
 Madre Occidental (Durango and Chihuahua);
 (5) isolated spots in the Sierra Madre del Sur
 (Guerrero) west of Chilpancingo; and (6) the
 Tarascan Sierra of Michoacán. The log cabin in
 342 Durango and Chihuahua possibly may have been
 171 introduced by United States Confederate refugees,
 177 a few of whom settled in the Sierra Madre in the
 late 1860's and 1870's. Located near one of the
 main Veracruz-México roads, the Perote people
 also may have obtained the idea of interlocked
 logs from United States or European travelers or
 settlers. The plank structures of Michoacan are
 technically superior to the North American log
 cabin (introduced into the North American colo-
 nies from Scandinavia in the 17th century), and
 are known to have existed since the last quarter
 of the 18th century. Log cabins were apparently
 unknown in Spain during the colonial period.
 The idea of their construction may have been
 introduced into Mexico from northern Europe.

342 There is nothing in the Relación de Michoacán
 or in the available Relaciones Geográficas (Muc.
 Nac., leg. 102) that indicates the presence of log
 structures among 16th-century Tarascans.²⁹ The
 native houses were constructed of adobe or stone
 with four-shed straw-thatched roofs. The first
 definite evidence of the modern *troje* that the writer
 has encountered appears in the Calderon report of
 1789 (AGN. Historia, vol. 73), which mentions
 "... jacales de ... vigas horizontales cubiertas
 de tajamanil ... " in Tuxtecuaro (f. 336v), "...
 cuatro trojes de Maderas de Pino, bien constru-
 idas y conservadas ... " in Nocutzepo (Lake
 Pátzcuaro) (f. 301), and "... chozas (or casas)
 de madera ... " in many other towns in the Sierra
 (map 18). In most pueblos, however, wooden
 houses were mingled with those of stone or adobe.
 Moreover, houses constructed of small logs or
 poles placed vertically ("*estacas plantadas*") were

[72] ²⁹ Log fortifications were constructed by the Tarascans at Tuxtecuaro
 (Ciudad Hidalgo) in pre-Spanish times (Stanislavski, 1907 a, p. 40). There
 is no evidence, however, that the notching technique was known. For a
 description of pre-Conquest Tarascan houses, see Bash, Carrasco, and
 McCorkle, 1964, pp. 55-56.

- 342 widespread both in the Sierra and in surrounding areas. The modern *troje*, then, appears to have been introduced into Michoacán sometime between 1580 and 1780.
- [177]

Some native constructional and functional elements were applied to the log or plank structure. For instance, the square floor plan and the four-shed roof were common features of the aboriginal house. Again, the use of the *troje* as a storehouse and the retention of the separate kitchen as living quarters would seem to indicate application of native uses to an introduced element. The storage of grain in the loft, however, may be an introduced European trait. As in most parts of indigenous Mexico, separate granaries (*trojes*) were possibly employed by pre-Conquest Tarascans.⁴⁰

342 The wooden *troje* is disappearing in the Tarascan area. As mentioned above, a few old structures exist in some of the towns outside the Sierra. According to the local inhabitants, such *trojes* were formerly more numerous; however, there is no evidence that the entire town was once composed of wooden houses. Owing to decrease in large pines and fir, the cheaper adobe and stone structures are gradually replacing the *troje* in the Sierra towns.⁴¹ Only a few small Sierra villages and *ranchos* consist entirely of wooden structures.

342 In addition to the interlocked plank house, various roofing materials have been introduced into the Tarascan area (as well as into all parts of Mexico). Aboriginally, houses were roofed with grass or palm thatch, which is still employed in the *tierra caliente* of Michoacán. During the last half of the 16th century Basque miners probably introduced the shake (*tejamanil*) to roof their houses and ore refineries at the mining centers in central Mexico.⁴² From the mines the use of shakes gradually spread to Indian villages situated

[Text continues Top of P. 32.a]

⁴⁰ One of the "temporary structures" depicted in the *Relación de Michoacán* is similar to the modern vernacular granaries (*cucernates*) of parts of Morelos, Puebla, and Tlaxcala. Moreover, the original ms. of the *Relación de Triptitio*, 1580 (in the García Library, University of Texas, Austin), illustrates a vernacular *troje* similar to that shown in the *Relación de Michoacán*. The Triptitio *troje* was of two stories, the lower floor being used to store maize, the upper, reached by a notched log, for storing clothes, personal valuables, etc.

⁴¹ Fair adobe brick can be made in the Sierra by mixing the local soil (of low clay content) with pine needles.

⁴² The *Relaciones Geográficas* of 1579-81 (Mex. Naz., leg. 102) invariably mention shaken roofs in mining centers of New Spain. In the modern Basque country, however, shakes are used to roof only shepherds' huts (Beals, Carrasco, and McCorkle, 1944, p. 34).

342 within or near pine forests. By 1789 most of the
 177 buildings in Tarascan towns in the Lake and
 Sierra regions were roofed with shakes (map 18).
 Today in the towns bordering the Sierra the red
 Castilian tile has completely replaced *tejamanil*
 and is slowly penetrating into the Sierra towns.⁴³

THE LAND SYSTEM AND THE PUEBLO

621 Tarascan settlements are fundamentally agri-
 423 cultural villages. They include not only dwellings
 arranged along streets and in house lots, but also
 the surrounding farm land. The land is the body
 of the pueblo, whose political and economic life
 revolves around land ownership and boundaries,
 crop planting and harvesting.

423 Few records exist on the ancient Tarascan land
 311 system; most lands, however, were probably held
 in common. Each community owned surround-
 ing lands, the limits of which were determined by
 metes and bounds; the record and adjudication of
 pueblo boundaries were in the hands of the
 village chief, who apportioned agricultural plots
 to his subjects.⁴⁴ As in many modern Indian
 areas of Mexico, the aboriginal concept of village
 lands and their established boundaries is indurated
 in the present, political and economic structure of
 the Tarascan pueblos.⁴⁵ Such holdings in the
 Sierra include various types of land: *monte*, or
 woodland pasture on steep mountain slopes and on
 lava flows; cropland in basin floors (*planes*, *t'pákua*),
 on lower mountain slopes (*laderas*, *uanáten*), and
 in craters of cinder cones (*joyas*, *t'pákua-supiéu*).
 In La Cañada often the following lands are
 held by a given pueblo: irrigable alluvium on
 the valley floor, *temporal* lands and *monte* on the
 adjacent slopes, and *humedad* lands in the Sierra.
 In the Lake area types of land vary from pueblo to
 pueblo. Often small strips of irrigable vegetable
 plots are held along the lake shore; most towns
 hold *temporal* land on the lower slopes; those on

⁴³ Although used in most Spanish towns (except mining centers) in New Spain since the late 16th century, tiles began to appear in the Lake Pátzcuaro district only in the late 18th century. In 1789 Pátzcuaro was the only town in the vicinity with tile roofs (approximately 50 percent of the houses were roofed with tile, the remainder, with shakes). In the same year one house in Naranja boasted of a tile roof. (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 265, 313.)

⁴⁴ A copy of an aboriginal land title (1819) of Cheranztzicuarin is extant in AGN Tierras, vol. 567, exped. 8.

⁴⁵ In many respects the native land system in central Mexico paralleled that of 16th century Spain. Particularly was this true in regard to the concept of village holdings.

[P. 33-a]

- 423 hectares in size,⁴² and may be used indefinitely by the recipient, provided they are not left untilled for more than two successive years. They may be inherited by sons, daughters, or in-laws, and may be divided among them. A family head may sell the use rights of his land to another member of the community, but not to outsiders. The official title to lands is held by the pueblo.

Another remnant of communal holdings, common in all parts of Tarasca, is found in the woodland, which is considered common land.⁴³

[804]

⁴² In most parts of Tarasca land is measured in terms of the quantity of grain used in planting. Thus, in La Cañada a plot of maize land may vary from 1 to 5 liters of maize in size. Approximately 3 liters of maize is necessary to plant 1 hectare. (The term "hectare," however, is unknown to most Tarascans.) Five liters of maize equal 1 *medida*; 100 liters of maize are equivalent to 1 *fanega* (one hundredweight), or one *yunta*, meaning the amount of land in which a team (*yunta*) of oxen can plant one *fanega* of maize in one season. In terms of wheat, 44 liters equal 1 *carga*, or from 1 to 1 1/4 *yuntas*. The above equivalents are those used in Chilchota and Carapan. Similar land measurements are employed in the Sierra.

⁴³ The aboriginal custom parallels the ancient Spanish practice of reserving woodland as communal property.

TARASCAN ECONOMY

- 241 Tarascan economy is today, and was in pre-Conquest times, as diversified as that of any large Indian group in North America. Agriculture has always been the preeminent occupation of most of the Tarascan population. Formerly, a significant part of the people were fishers (or farmers and fishers), living around the shores of Lakes Pátzcuaro and Zirahuén and the numerous lakes and marshes of the northern plateau; the modern fishers are limited chiefly to the islands within Lake Pátzcuaro. Moreover, hunting and gathering, although now of small importance, is still practiced throughout the area. Apart from the food quest, two other occupations have characterized Tarascan economy since prehistoric days: handicrafts and trade. Many of the Tarascan villages specialize in particular home industries, for which they are famed over a large area. Again, in prehistoric and modern times the Tarascan has been one of the more notable Indian traders, serving as commercial middleman between the *tierra fría* and *tierra caliente* to the south and west.

AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS AND ASSOCIATED CROP TYPES

- 241 Tarascan agriculture involves a mixture of New and Old World plants and cultivation practices.

177 The native trilogy—maize, beans, and squash—
Text continues bottom P. 33b]

423 Before the promulgation of the Federal forest laws
 311 (1930's), all members of the pueblo reserved the
 [656] right to cut wood and lumber in the *monte* with
 permission of the *representante*. Today a Federal
 tax must be paid (but is often evaded) by each
 pueblo for lumber rights. Small plots of land
 (*desmontes*) may be cleared and planted in any
 part of the forest, but the farmer must first gain
 permission of the *representante* and his committee.
 In addition to the *monte* many pueblos possess
 certain croplands, called *tierras de la comunidad*,
 which are not assigned permanently to individuals,
 but are worked communally, usually by landless
 farmers, who receive a portion of the harvest as
 remuneration. The remainder of the crop is often
 stored in the pueblo as communal property to be
 sold by the *representante* for the town treasury or
 to be used as food in time of shortage.

TARASCAN ECONOMY

241 still forms the leading crop complex, but the
 177 European grains—wheat, barley, the broadbean
 and lentil—have become intimately associated
 with Tarascan agriculture. European fruits are
 grown with native types; Old World vegetables,
 mainly cabbage, have become an integral part of
 native food habits. But the modern Tarascan
 considers such crops, most of which were intro-
 duced over 400 years ago, as part of his aboriginal
 culture. Furthermore, although Tarascans still
 practice pre-Columbian shifting agriculture on
 steep slopes, the Old World plow has transformed
 indigenous cultivation on level and gently sloping
 lands.

Agricultural acculturation continues constantly.
 Tarascan *braceros* returning from the United
 States have brought in apple cuttings from the
 Yakima Valley, grapevines from California, corn
 from Iowa. Within the last three decades a South
 American *Oxalis* (*papa de Castilla*) has been intro-
 duced in the Sierra south and west of Lake
 Pátzcuaro. Again, alfalfa cultivation is slowly
 penetrating into many parts of the Sierra. Recent-
 ly the Federal Government introduced a few steel
 [654] plows in some Tarascan villages, and here and
 there one sees engine-powered threshing machines
 slowly replacing the ancient European threshing
 floor and flail.

- 241 The Tarascans, like many aboriginal groups
 177 strongly influenced by European culture, engage
 in two types of agriculture: field agriculture and
 horticulture. The former comprises extensive
 cultivation of grains in comparatively large fields
 with the plow and in small hillside plots with the
 hoe. Tarascan horticulture includes mainly the
 intensive cultivation of grains, vegetables, medic-
 inal plants, and fruits in the house-lot gardens
 (ekua^{ru}, sing., eku^{rueta}, pl., hispanicized to
ecuario); it also includes specialized truck garden-
 ing, such as that practiced on the shores of Lake
 Pátzcuaro.

FIELD AGRICULTURE AND ASSOCIATED CROPS

- 241 There are three basic native food crops of
 261 Mexico: maize (starch and oil), beans (protein),
 and squash (vegetable vitamin), all of which are
 now associated with field agriculture. In most
 Indian and many mestizo communities this com-
 plex forms the principal elements in the common
 diet; the three crops are planted together in the
 same field, cultivated together in the same man-
 ner, and harvested about the same time.

- 243 **Maize culture.**—The earliest record of maize in
 [172] the Tarascan area is found in the charred ears
 encountered in a lava flow 18 km. northwest of
 Morelia. The date of the flow is unknown, but
 maize was probably known to the Tarascans when
 they settled in the Sierra and the northern
 plateau.

The provenience of maize cultivated by the
 early Tarascans is but a small part of the complex
 and obscure movements of corn from a secondary
 center of origin in southern Mexico or northern
 Central America.²⁰ Anderson (1946 a) has de-
 scribed three distinct races of *Zea mays* in central
 Mexico: (1) the Mexican Pyramidal, centering in
 the eastern highlands; (2) Mexican Narrow Ear,
 found in western Mexico, particularly in both cold
 and hot lands of Jalisco and Nayarit; and (3)
 Mountain Yellow, a high altitude maize (usually
 above 7,000 ft.) encountered in purest form in the
 highlands of western Mexico.²¹ Located between

²⁰ See Mangelorff and Cameron (1942) on the hybridization of South
 American primitive maize and *Tripsacum* in Middle America.

²¹ Following is a brief description of the above races as given by Anderson
 (1946 a, p. 173): (1) Mexican Pyramidal. Ears short, tapering regularly butt
 to tip; row number high to very high (16-24). Kernels dented and pointed.
 Color prevalently white and pale yellow. Plants short, proscoured inter-
 venial red or purple coloring. Shallow root system, leaves broad and pubes-
 cent. Tassels with few or no branches. (2) Mexican Narrow Ear. Ears
 narrow, long, irregularly long-tapered, compressed at butt. Low row num-

243 old people, but since the old ones have died, no one had continued its cultivation. This suggests that the western corn was formerly predominant in the area, which later was invaded by the eastern race.

243 Maize types are continually migrating from one pueblo to another within the Tarascan area and are also being introduced from the outside.

177 For instance, *maíz de Sievicho* has been grown in Arantepacua since 1889; *maíz de Chocandirín* (Nahuatl name for Tingüindín) is raised in Atapan; *maíz de Urúscato* in Tarecuato, etc. All such corns are morphologically alike, being differentiated chiefly by color. Again, in some Sierra pueblos farmers grow a corn called "toluca" or "tulukenio," presumably an introduction from the Valley of Toluca.²³ Around 1900 a maize called "chalco" from the Lake Chalco district in the Valley of Mexico was brought into the newly drained Zacapu Basin, where it now comprises the main corn of the surrounding Tarascan villages. Chalco is a modernly developed maize adapted to wet soils. In the Zacapu Basin it is grown "*de humedad*," and in recent years has been introduced into the Nahuatzen area.

243 The mountain corns.—On the steep slopes of the Sierra volcanoes the small Mountain Yellow maize is cultivated in little temporary clearings (*desmonte*, *čapán*, *čapákata*). This corn is obviously mixed with eastern field varieties, as in many cases the basal enlargement of the ear is not apparent and grain form varies from point to dent. Low row number (8-14), however, is invariably present. Color varies from yellow to white, often with pink present in the pericarp. Tolerant of light frosts and infertile soils and adapted to the ancient indigenous cultivation sites and practices, this maize may be one of the oldest in the area.

The special corns: *ekúáru* maize (Anderson 1946 a, 1946 b).—One of the most interesting of the modern Tarascan corns is that cultivated in the house-lot gardens (*solar*, *ekúáru*).²⁴ It is grown mainly for roasting ears (*elotes*). It is morphologically distinct from the field corns,

²³ According to Beals (1944, p. 25), the tulukenio found at Cherán is a mountain type having definite characteristics of Mountain Yellow and grown in the slopes and mountain clearings. In other pueblos (e. g. Arantepacua) tulukenio is a field maize with Mexican Pyramidal characteristics.

²⁴ In the Sierra and the Lake region the term "ekúáru" is used to mean house lot. In the mestizo towns and some Tarascan pueblos of the northern area, particularly La Cañada and west thereof, *ekúáru* means small hillside cornfields, while the Spanish *solar* is used to designate house lot.

243 for most of the Sierra. Here, therefore, only the major processes and regional differences will be highlighted.

⁴¹²
¹⁷⁷ *Ground preparation and planting.*—On the level basin floors and lower hill slopes, land is prepared for maize planting with the plow (*arado*). The ancient Egyptian two-piece affair drawn by a pair of oxen is the most common type of plow used by the Tarascans and by most of the present-day farmers of Mexico. (See Beals, 1946, p. 22, for illustration of this primitive plow.) Introduced into the Tarascan area in the 1520's or 1530's, this instrument was readily taken over by the native farmers. Adaptation to the plow was possibly slow in the Sierra, where most of the aboriginal agriculture was on steep slopes; but at least by 1624 the farmers of Cherán were cultivating the lower slopes near the town with the *arado* (AGN Tierras, vol. 83, expd. 13).

Prior to the introduction of the plow the flattish basin plains of the Sierra apparently were infrequently cultivated. Early accounts of Tarascan farming emphasize the importance of *desmonte* agriculture on the steep slopes. A report of 1599 describing the pueblo of Corundapan (now nonexistent) in the Sierra near Tingambato, states that the natives had no lands in adjacent basin plains, but, as was customary among Tarascan peoples, planted on the slopes in order to obviate frost hazard.²² The probable occurrence of a grass sod in the basin plains may also have discouraged their cultivation. A description (1603) of the lands of Capacuaro mentions the large number of *desmontes*, but points out the possibility of cultivating an unused plain nearby, which was relatively free of shrubs and trees.²³ Such areas, though difficult to till with the aboriginal digging stick, were readily adapted to plow culture.

243 The plow now used in Tarasca probably has not
412 changed in form since the early 16th century. For most plowing the straight iron plow tip (8 to 10 in. long, 3 in. wide), called the *reja*, is fastened

²² AGN Tierras, vol. 84, expd. 2. "... no tienen tierras en las llanuras y así siembran en el monte como lo acostumbró toda la nación tarasca en lo que en tierra fría por abrigar sus sembrados de los vientos ...". This statement is from one of the field reports which accompanied recommendations for the village congregations at the end of the 16th century. Obviously, owing to air drainage, frost hazards are less on lower slopes than on the basin flats, a fact tacitly recognized by modern Tarascan farmers.

²³ AGN Congregaciones, ff. 14v-15. Fray Diego Múñiz describes the plain as "... llanada ... la mayor parte rasa y descubierta, fértil y fácil de labrar [with the plow, of course] ... capaz de mucha semilla y cosecha ...".

243 the appearance of terraces.³³ Remnants of pre-Columbian terrace agriculture occur in the vicinity of Chilchota in La Cañada.³⁴

412 In the small plots described above, the large
243 metal hoe (*azada*, *azadón*, with blade perpendicular to handle) is the principal instrument used to prepare the soil. Although called by the native name (*t'ekáʔakua* or *tarákua*) by some Tarascans, the *azadón* is European, having been introduced into Tarascan culture early in the 16th century. The aboriginal *t'ekáʔakua* (with blade parallel to handle) is no longer used to prepare soil for planting, but, as mentioned above, is still sometimes employed to replant. In pre-Conquest times this instrument (at least in the *tierra caliente*) carried a copper alloy blade (Mus. Nac., leg. 102, Rel. de Cinguacingo, 1581); the *tarákua* with a triangular iron blade is at present employed by the mountain people in the Balsas drainage of Guerrero (Hendrichs, 1945-46, vol. 1, pp. 31-32).

Planting in the *desmontes* and other small maize plots is performed by opening a small hole with the *azadón*, dropping in the seeds, and covering them with earth by a sweep of the foot. The seed holes are spaced 2 to 3 feet apart, but no attempt is made to form straight rows. Maize is cultivated twice (*escarda* and *segunda*) with the *azadón*.

243 *Maize harvest and storage.*—Three maize products are obtained from the field: roasting ears (*elotes*), fodder (*rastrojo*), and mature ears (*mazorcas*, *šanfni*). Roasting ears come mainly from the special colored corns of the house-lot garden, but many are taken from the fields. In the *humedad* lands of the Sierra *elote* is ready by August in the *temporal* lands, in July.³⁵ At high elevations (e. g. around the *ranch*o of Cherato) the development of *elote* from corn planted in March

³³ These apparent terraces are best developed along the north and west shores of Tadu-k'eri Peninsula.

³⁴ The following account of the terrace agriculture near Chilchota is given in the *Relación Geográfica* for that town (1570):

"... por ser muy pedregosa y de malpais las piedras estan guisadas a mano como granos dexando entre grano y grano con una vara de mader de ancho hinclo donde plantaban el maiz, y es esto tanto y hecho por tal orden que porras con que pona espanto" (Mus. Nac., leg. 102, f. 50v).

[196] ³⁵ In some Tarascan towns a minor celebration occurs when roasting ears begin to mature. The first ears picked in the village are taken through the streets by girls, who invite people to kiss the *elotes*. The ears are then taken to the village church and placed on the altar. Later, when all the fields and home lots are in *elote*, girls make special tamales (skips) of green corn for friends and the family. The *elote fiesta* is apparently a vestige of a significant aboriginal harvest rite. Other minor festivals occur on the first day of the fall-corn or spring-wheat harvests, but they are usually family days and consist mainly of a "cerbate," or drinking spree. Often special foods—tamales, *cu tpu* (meat stew)—are prepared. There are no religious rites involved in the latter fiestas.

439 located around the Sierra in areas favored by irrigation or rich soils, such as the upper escarpment in the South or the Zacapu Basin in the North. White field maize and yellow field maize comprise the bulk of the export crop. Ekuazu maize is entirely for home consumption and most of the mountain crop is used locally. Accurate statistics on crop production and export are not available for the Tarascan area; export data probably do not exist, since public records of sales are not kept in the villages.

444 Bean culture.—As an aboriginal cultigen the bean (*frijol*, t'añin) is second only to maize in Tarascan agriculture and food habits. Twenty varieties of the kidney bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) are cultivated in modern Tarasca. Although most of these are found in many parts of central Mexico,⁶⁶ a few may be peculiar to the Sierra of Michoacán. Among the latter are small cream- or brown-colored beans called *petrona* or *uañari* in some Sierra villages; another is called *karáñari*. The Indians regard such beans as "criollos," or natives to the local countryside, while other varieties, which carry non-Tarascan names, are acknowledged to have been introduced from the outside. Many wild beans are reported to exist in the Sierra, though only one, called *uipínju* (probably *P. vulgaris*) was described in Pamatácuaro, where it is tolerated along edges of maize fields. It is gathered and eaten, but is little liked.⁶⁷

• [17] Besides the kidney bean, the Tarascans cultivate the large-seeded *Phaseolus coccineus* L. (*P. multifloris* Willd.), which they call *kokóñ* (the *ayócote* or *ayocotl* of the Nahuatl-speaking people).⁶⁸ This bean is rarely grown or used by mestizos and even among the Indians its cultivation is dying out.⁶⁹ It is now grown only by the more conservative people, especially in the household gardens where it is planted and tended by women. *Kokóñ*, therefore, must be an old cultigen in the area. Having a sweet flavor, it is not as well liked as the newer kidney beans from the outside. In some of the Lake pueblos *kokóñ* has

⁶⁶ The common central Mexican varieties are: Bayo Grande, Bayo Chico, Mexicano, Colorado, Color de Rosa (Rosa de Castilla), Encarnado, Prieto, Blanco, Huiguerrilla, etc.

⁶⁷ Unfortunately, a seed specimen of this bean was unobtainable. Another doubtful wild *Phaseolus* is reported from Corupo; called *frijol cimarrón*, it produces a white seed and an enlarged root stalk ("raíz como camote").

⁶⁸ The Spanish terms "*petate*" and "*frijoles*" are also used in some localities. In Pamatácuaro *P. coccineus* is known as *jape*.

⁶⁹ In many pueblos (Sierra and Lake regions) it was stated that *kokóñ* was cultivated many years ago, but since the introduction of better flavored beans from mestizo towns, it was no longer grown.

[P. 41-6]

244

Squash culture.—The cucurbits complete the ancient Mexican crop complex. Three species of the genus *Cucurbita* are today cultivated in the Tarascan area: *C. pepo* (*calabaza común* purú), *C. moschata* (*calabaza de Castilla*, purú), and *C. ficifolia* (*chilacayote* or *chilacayote*, t'ik'ápa or tikápa).²⁴ *C. pepo* appears to be the ancient squash of the area, for it is referred to as *calabaza común* or *calabaza corriente*, and in mestizo villages nearby as *calabaza tarasca*. Surprisingly few varieties occur, the most common being oblong (20 cm. long), ribbed (10), green and yellow mottled, with the ordinary five-sided peduncle. Smooth types are also cultivated. A small *pepo*, called *čekámita*, is grown in a few villages of the Sierra and La Cañada. In some pueblos the common name of *C. moschata* is *calabaza de la* ● [117] *Castilla*, which may indicate that this squash was introduced into the area after the Spanish Conquest; it is found mainly around the edges of the Sierra. Some varieties are flat and round, similar to the pumpkins of the northeastern part of the United States. Others are small, crooked-neck types.

In contrast to its minor place in the agriculture of many indigenous groups of Mexico, *C. ficifolia* is an important cultigen among the Tarascans. Two varieties are grown, both having the appearance of a watermelon: one with black seeds (*chilacayote común*, tikápa), and the other with white seeds (*chilacayote-calabaza*, purútikápa). Of the two, the latter is said to have the better flavor.

Like *frijol*, squash is ordinarily planted with maize in both plow and hoe lands. Squash seeds are rarely planted in the same hill with maize and beans; rather the plantings are widely spaced (5 to 6 meters) along the rows or edges of the field in order to allow for spreading. *Chilacayote* (and often common squash) is usually planted in the fertile house lots or in the *desmontes*, where the soil has been fertilized by wood ash. Within the plowlands it is sometimes planted in a *quemazón*, a spot where a log is burned and ashes well mixed with underlying soil. Squashes are gathered in October or November before the maize harvest.

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Chilacayotes are sun-cured on roofs or on adobe fences for 3 or 4 weeks, and are then stored in the house loft or in a corner of the dwelling.

²⁴ Botanical identification of the squash seed collected in the Tarascan area was kindly made by Dr. T. W. Whitaker, of the United States Department of Agriculture.

244 Tarascans plant few other minor native cultigens in the field. Camote or the sweetpotato (*Ipomoea batatas*) and jicama (*Pachyrhizus erosus*) are planted in small amounts in La Cañada, but commercial production is found in the warm lands around Zamora, Lake Chapala, and the southern escarpment, outside the Tarascan area. Native vegetables such as chile and tomatoes are discussed under horticulture.

177 Introduced New World crops.—In Tarascan field agriculture these consist of two tubers: the South American potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and, as mentioned earlier, an *Oxalis* (*papa de Castilla*).²¹ Neither has much place in Tarascan food habits. The potato is now grown in some lowlands bordering the Sierra, e. g. in Comanja, where it is planted with maize. Its cultivation is slowly penetrating the Sierra, though most of the highland pueblos still reject it. Beals (1946, p. 26) states that Cherrán residents began to grow potatoes around 1938.

243 Old World crops in Tarascan field agriculture.—Among the crops which the Spaniards introduced into Tarascan culture the small grains, wheat and barley, were the more significant in terms of both food value and degree of adaptation. Wheat was probably first sown in the Lake area by Spanish missionaries during the 1530's; the Spanish ranchers and *encomenderos*, however, for whom white bread was the main item of diet, were the principal carriers of wheat culture among the natives. By the mid-16th century Spanish wheat fields had been established in many parts of the northern plateau, and Tarascans of various pueblos in that area were cultivating the grain in special fields in order to meet tribute demands of the Crown and *encomenderos*.²² Arabic irrigation techniques appear to have been introduced jointly with wheat culture, for both early Spanish and Indian wheat fields in the northern Tarascan area were artificially watered.²³ The Relaciones Geo-

[312]

²¹ The name "*papa de Castilla*" might indicate that the *Oxalis* species has been cultivated in Mexico for some time. According to local informants, however, it has been known in the area south and west of Lake Pátzcuaro for only 30 or 40 years. The tuber is often seen in the Pátzcuaro market. In Pichátaro it is boiled and eaten with piloncillo.

²² The *Suma de Visitas*, ca. 1540 (Pase y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1) mentions that wheat was cultivated in the following indigenous pueblos of Michoacán: Acolambo, Chocondiro, Chiquimto, Chilchota, Guanazo (Santa María Arío), Taymeo, Indaparapeo, Zacapu. Indians, however, were slow to adopt wheat foods. During the last quarter of the 16th century the Indians of La Cañada ate wheat only in times of maize famine (Mss. Neg. 102, Rel. de Chilchota, 1579).

²³ Spaniards had introduced a Mediterranean grain adapted to winter rains and dry summers into a land of dry winters and wet summers. Con-

243 gráficas of 1579-81 (Mus. Nac., leg. 102) indicate
 177 that by the end of the 16th century wheat cultivation was well established in the Tarascan area around the margins of the Sierra, i. e., in those areas first settled by Spanish ranchers.⁸⁴ Wheat penetrated slowly into the conservative Sierra. The Relación of Tingüindín (1581) states that in the Sierra villages the Indians had not taken to wheat cultivation. Even by 1789 some of the Sierra pueblos did not grow wheat, but by 1820 the grain was at last being cultivated in all the towns, Urapicho, Cocucho, Pamatácuaro, and Cheranátzicurin being among the last to adopt it (AAM, siglo XIX, leg. 707, Memoria estadística, 1841).⁸⁵

243 Today in most Sierra pueblos wheat is considered second only to maize in terms of acreage. Some towns raise the grain chiefly as a cash crop; others consume a large portion of the harvest. The Lake area and La Cañada, however, are the principal Tarascan wheat districts. In both, wheat acreage exceeds that of maize.⁸⁶ Although wheat foods are eaten in all Tarascan towns, in none do they replace maize as the chief item of diet. Throughout the present indigenous area
 [17] wheat foods play a significant part in religious festivals, apparently an adoption of European customs through Church influence.

A soft wheat called "colorado," probably a descendant of the Spanish grain introduced 400 years ago, is the principal type sown by Tarascan farmers. Both bearded and beardless varieties occur. This wheat is the "*trigo de temporal*" or "*trigo aventurado*," planted in October and harvested from April to June, depending on eleva-

[312] sequently, to insure good yields, they resorted at once to irrigation. Later, experiments probably showed that a poor to fair yield could be obtained without irrigation in central Mexico, where occasional light winter rains occur.

⁸⁴ The wheat-growing areas mentioned: all of the northern plateau region, including La Cañada; Tarecuto (*trigo de temporal*); Tingüindín; and Peribán. The Ponce Relación (observations made in 1586) mentions wheat at various Lake towns: Tzintzuntzan, San Jerónimo, Erongaricuaró, and Tacupato (Cocuchepo or present Quiroga).

⁸⁵ The Calderón report of 1789 (AGN Historia, vol. 73) mentions wheat only in a few Tarascan pueblos. It specifies, however, that only two pueblos (Ocumicho and Pamatácuaro) of the Sierra grew maize exclusively. The report may have neglected to indicate many pueblos in which small amounts of wheat might have been cultivated.

⁸⁶ According to data from Secretaría de Agricultura records (1944), wheat acreage equaled that of maize in the municipio of Pitzcuare; in those of Erongaricuaró and Quiroga the acreage of wheat was more than twice that of maize; in Tzintzuntzan, however, maize acreage exceeded that of wheat by eight times. In the municipio of Chilichota (which includes La Cañada) approximately 800 hectares were planted to maize, while 513 were in wheat. Considering the valley of La Cañada alone, wheat acreage probably would exceed that of maize.

245 *Castilla*), and the *granada de China*, and a great variety of native subtropical fruits such as the aguacate, chirimoya, guayaba, and zapote blanco. In the warmer sections of the *tierra templada* are found tropical fruits, the native mamey and zapote prieto, the Asiatic mango, Old World varieties of the banana, and the possibly native plantain.

245 The European fruits were brought into the Tarascan area early in the 16th century mainly by missionaries. Every mission, church, or convent had its small garden where the priest and Indian neophytes cared for fruit trees and vegetables. Consequently the new fruits spread rapidly among the Tarascan villages, and were soon fully accepted into the native economy. Both the *Relaciones geográficas* (Mus. Nac., leg. 102) and the Ponce Relación indicate the widespread cultivation of European fruits in the Tarascan area during the latter part of the 16th century. With fruit cultivation the missionaries probably introduced the technique of grafting, e. g., the insertion of apple and pear cuttings into native *tejocote* to insure a hardy root system adapted to local soils and climate. Grafting is still practiced in most Tarascan villages.

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245 Arboriculture among modern Tarascans consists of little more than a few fruit trees planted in the ekuáru or along hedgerows. Most trees are only semicultivated. Except for initial grafting [242] of apples and pears and the planting of shoots of other fruits, little care is taken of trees. Systematic pruning is not practiced, nor is any attempt made to control disease or insect pests.

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Although in most pueblos fruit is grown chiefly for local consumption, the people of some towns specialize in raising certain fruits for export. The Sierra communities of Cumachuén and Pichátaro are the apple producers;⁶⁶ Cherán, Parangaricutiro (prior to the volcano), Tanéltaro, and the rancho of Tenguecho specialize in pears.⁶⁷ In these towns the entire ekuáru of some households may be devoted to fruit trees, forming a small

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⁶⁶ Many varieties of apples are marketed in these towns. The most popular is termed *camuesa*, a reddish fruit picked in August and September. Others, *chats*, *marionas*, *chats de Serins* (a small crab apple), are harvested in October. In addition, the small red *morellas* is grown in Pichátaro. Apples from Cumachuén and Pichátaro are carried by *erreros* into the *tierra caliente* as far as Petatlán on the Pacific coast of Guerrero. They are also taken to the large markets of the plateau: Zamora, Pátzcuaro, Zacapu.

⁶⁷ In 1780 pears formed one of the main industries of Capacuaro, but are now relatively unimportant (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 328). See Beale, 1946, pp. 27-28, for description of pear picking.

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239 In spite of unfavorable environment for stock raising, many families possess small herds (10-25 head) of cattle, which roam the Sierra forests.¹⁰⁷ During the latter part of the dry season some cattle die of starvation, and the springs and wells barely afford sufficient water for existing herds. The fatter animals are occasionally sold to the local butcher or home-killed for meat. Only the more wealthy have riding horses, and few except *arrieros* possess mules. When in use oxen and burros are often stabled in the house lot. All livestock is turned into the fields after harvest to graze on stubble and to fertilize the land. The small animals, such as sheep and pigs (*ganado menor*) are common throughout present Tarasca.¹⁰⁸ In almost every village a few families own sheep, flocks ranging in size from 50 to 1,000 head. The greatest number of flocks are found around the higher mountains of the Sierra, such as Tancitaro,¹⁰⁹ Patamban, and Quinceo, where summer pastures (bunchgrass) are abundant near the summits. In winter, flocks are grazed in harvested cornfields, for this is a recognized method of soil fertilization. Most of the inhabitants of the *ranchos* around Cerro de Patamban are shepherd-farmers, at least half of their time being devoted to sheep raising. During the summer months boys and girls are

177 ¹⁰⁷ Few data exist concerning the introduction of cattle into the Sierra. The original land title of Památcuaro, dated June 1532, mentions the possession of European domestic animals by the Indians of that village. "*Tuviera los naturales como pobladores las preeminencias necesarias de pueblo, Injiería, campanas sonoras, armenario: chinas de todas clases de ganados, vacas de vientre, Burros, asnos, osos y bestias mularas y caballerias . . .*" Again, from the same document: "*. . . los animales y ganados son senos y de competente tamaño . . .*" These data were taken from a certified copy (1937) of the original document; the latter is reported to be in the *fejetura* of Památcuaro. If the document is correct, European animals were taken into the native culture at an extremely early date. The Ponce Relación (1872, vol. 2, p. 133) mentions herds belonging to natives pasturing on the slopes of Cerro de Tancitaro and watering at the lake on its summit in 1584. Around 1700 the people of Cheránáicuirín possessed a *sitio de ganado mayor* (pasture for large animals such as horses and cattle) near the village (AGN Tierras, vol. 967, expd. 8). In the northern plateau and *tierra caliente* regions, where colonial *cattle estancias* were numerous, many Indians quickly became *saperos*, but probably few acquired their own herds.

¹⁰⁸ Tarascans quickly adopted the sheep. By 1600 many Indians around the shores of Lake Cuitzeo possessed flocks numbering from 500 to 400 head. "*. . . crisa sus carneros con tan buen orden y concierto como en España . . .*" (Mss. Nec., leg. 102, Rel. de Cuitzeo). A great number of Indians living near the northern plateau pastures were forced to tend flocks of Spanish *ovaceas*. The Lake and Sierra Tarascans also likely acquired sheep at an early date. In many parts of Mexico the Indians rapidly took to sheep raising soon after the Spaniards introduced the animal early in the 16th century. During the colonial period Indians were the chief sheep raisers in New Spain, either as hired shepherds or as owners of flocks. Possibly the annual or semi-annual wool clip and the fact that the smaller animals are more easily herded than cattle, prompted the natives to adapt themselves readily to sheep raising.

¹⁰⁹ Most of the flocks on Tancitaro and other areas adjacent to Parícutin were destroyed by heavy ash fall during the spring and summer of 1943. Formerly, some Tarascans in that area owned flocks as large as 5,000 or 6,000 head. One man in Nuri is reported to have had 30,000.

[P. 49-b]

293 [483] During the summer months boys and girls are the full-time shepherds, driving herds up the mountain slope each morning and down to the folds near the house at evening. The elders perform the semiannual shearing and often tend the flocks in the cornfields during the winter. Professional shepherds are sometimes hired by sheep owners to care for their flocks.

236 The sheep of the Tarascans are small, scrawny animals, descendants of the 16th-century Spanish breeds. In a given flock about half the animals are black, the rest white (pl. 7). Often a few goats graze with the flock. The Indians are usually financially unable to improve the breed with new blood; in only one case did the writer observe a merino ram. The Tarascans raise sheep mainly for wool. The *rancheros* around Cerro de Patamban shear their animals with hand clippers every 6 months. Some wool is obtained also by the girl shepherds, who pluck from the backs of sheep while the animals are grazing; as she plucks, the girl spins the wool on a whorl spindle, completing a ball of yarn as large as the fist at the end of day. In many villages local wool is used for weaving, many weavers possessing their own flocks. Otherwise the wool clip is sold to people from other villages or to mestizo wholesale buyers.

231 177 The hog was the first European animal domesticate that the Spaniards brought into the Tarascan area in quantity, and was possibly one of the first of the new animals adopted into Indian culture. As early as 1525 Spaniards were raising large droves of hogs in the vicinity of Pátzcuaro in order to supply food to placer operations in the Balsas (Millares Carlo and Mantecón, 1945, p. 32).¹¹⁰ Indians were used as swineherds. Throughout the colonial period large numbers of hogs were fed in the marsh areas north of the Sierra and droves were periodically driven to Toluca and the valley of Mexico (Pase y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, p. 180). Today the hog is common in every Tarascan village. Practically every household owns two or three animals, which serve as scavengers, running the streets by day; enough maize and scraps are fed the animals to induce them to return at night to the proper pen in the

¹¹⁰ The hog appears to have been the first Old World animal raised on a large scale in New Spain. Moreover, hog culture was intimately connected with gold panning in Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Michacán (1521-26). Droves were driven along with the shifting placer camps, the animals feeding on fallen tropical fruits (e. g. the *chirashu*), roots, and wild tubers in the *tierra caliente*. "*Carne de puerco*" was the chief "energy" food given the Indian labor gangs.

[P. 56-b]

313 of Nahuatzen, Sevina, and Cumachuén was almost completely stripped by the mills. Today in this area, barren, windswept sheep pastures, supporting occasional remnant clumps of pine, indicate the extent of forest destruction (pl. 8). Throughout the Sierra there is probably not a piece of virgin timber, so long and thorough has been lumber exploitation.

HANDICRAFTS

438 Among most people lacking modern transporta-
 472 tion facilities and mass production techniques,
 463 cottage industries, often termed "native crafts," are characteristic of the local economy. Owing to the presence of particular raw materials nearby and/or to traditional skills, people of one village often tend to specialize in one or more crafts. Cottage industry and village specialization are prevalent in most of indigenous and even mestizo Mexico. It is and has been particularly so among the Tarascans, whom the early Spanish chroniclers described as a skilled and clever people (Beaumont, 1874, vol. 2, p. 165). Moreover, progressive exhaustion of originally poor soils and population increase have forced many farmers of the Sierra to turn to crafts for additional income. Today five general handicrafts (ceramics, textiles, woodwork, leathercraft, and metalwork) are practiced and over 30 types of articles made among 54 Tarascan towns and *ranchos* (map 20). Only 10 Tarascan-speaking pueblos lack a cottage industry. In 26 pueblos at least 25 percent of the "working" population¹³ practice various crafts. Some villages specialize in only one industry. For example, over 80 percent of the working population of Santa Fé de la Laguna make pottery; nine-tenths of that of Jarácuaro are hat makers. Moreover, many towns which carry on various handicrafts may concentrate on one. Thus, Tarecuaro is famed for agave fiber products, Pamatácuaro and neighboring *ranchos* for wooden spoons and bowls. In most pueblos more than one craft is practiced, and in a few as many as eight distinct products are made.

177 Like so many of his material culture elements,
 463 the Tarascan's crafts represent a mixture of

¹³ The "working" population in Tarascan towns is estimated by dividing the total population by 3.3. The Tarascan family averages about 3 persons, but often the wife devotes her spare time to cottage industry and is sometimes helped by the older children. Boys over 12 years old usually work in the fields as farmers or in the house at the father's trade.

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463 aboriginal and European products and techniques. Most of his modern handicrafts are based on pre-Conquest industries (ceramics; wood products; leathercrafts; metal work in copper; weaving of cotton, agave fiber, stalks of tule). Except in a few pueblos, European techniques are now used in making pottery. In modern wood-
- [412] work the adz and the lathe are probably European and cabinet work is practiced entirely with Old World techniques. Cattle hide and horse hide
- [281] have replaced deerskin in leathercrafts, but the tanning techniques used are possibly aboriginal. Although the ancient belt loom is used for most
- [246] cotton and agave weaving, for weaving wool the European hand loom is employed. Sleeping mats (*petates*) are woven of tule as they were 500 years ago; hat making, on the other hand, is completely European. In regard to metals, European techniques have replaced native methods, and iron
- [325] has of course been introduced. Spanish friars and master craftsmen of the 16th century did indeed teach Tarascans many new techniques, but in most instances such were applied to long-established native industries.

[P. 63-b]

323 The manufacture of these two Tarascan pots is
 438 slowly dying. In 1946 only 10 women were
 making pottery in Cocucho, whereas in 1841 it
 was made in practically every household of the
 village (AAM, siglo XIX, leg. 707).

Today by far the greater amount of Tarascan
 pottery is made with molds by both men and
 women.¹²⁷ None is manufactured with the
 potter's wheel. All who use molds have taken
 [177] over the European glaze technique and the firing
 oven. Tarascan mold-made pottery can be
 differentiated according to finish. The "Patam-
 ban" type, for instance, carries a beautiful green
 glaze, known and admired over most of western
 Mexico.¹²⁸ Green glaze is also used in Santo
 Tomás and Santa Fé de la Laguna, having been
 recently introduced into the latter pueblo. Pot-
 tery hand-painted with brilliant floral designs on
 a background of black glaze is a specialty of Santa
 Fé de la Laguna. This unusual technique was
 [177] introduced around 1900, and was readily adopted
 by the inhabitants, whose former industry was
 batea painting. As mentioned previously, the
 inhabitants of Santa Fé de la Laguna began to
 make pots during the last quarter of the 19th
 century. Since then their ware has become
 [439] known throughout Mexico, and some is imported
 by United States curio shops. In 1936 the
 technique spread to Tirindaro, when daughters
 of a Santa Fé potter married into Tirindaro
 families. The most common modern household
 pottery is the Red ware, either glazed or polished,
 made in Tzintzuntzan, Huánsito, San José, and
 Patamban. Before being fired the large pieces,
 such as ollas and cántaros, are usually slipped
 with a red clay solution and then burnished
 with iron pyrites. A handsomely polished surface,
 similar to that of the pre-Conquest wares, results
 after firing. (Such ware is fired only once.)
 Smaller pieces are often glazed with litharge.
 Glazed pieces are fired twice, the litharge being
 applied after the first firing and the glazed surface
 appearing after the second. Designs are often
 painted in white (*tierra blanca*) and black (*tierra*
 [439] *de hormigón*). Red ware is carried as far as Guadal-

¹²⁷ See Foster (1948) for a detailed description of the mold technique used
 by the potters of Tzintzuntzan.

¹²⁸ To produce the green color, pulverized copper oxide (*óxido verde*) and
 yellow flinty quartz (*pedernal*) are added to the lead oxide (litharge) solution,
 which is applied to the pottery before firing. A black glaze is also made by
 adding a mineral called *tierra de hormigo* and pedernal to the litharge.

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323 ajara, Morelia, the *tierra caliente* of Guerrero, and Mexico City.

[439] Another type of ceramic industry is represented by the clay toy figurines made by the women of Ocumicho in their spare time. The hollow figures are formed with molds in shapes of diminutive horses, sheep, oxen, and men, each with an opening which serves as a whistle. After firing, they are painted and varnished. Owing to complete lack of water near the town in the dry season, this activity is carried on only during the rains. Ocumicho figurines are seen in markets in many parts of western Mexico and the *tierra caliente* of Guerrero and Michoacán.

Red clay tiles, which are slowly replacing shakes in the Tarascan area, are made in some pueblos within the clay belt on the margins of the Sierra. Tanaco is the sole town within the Sierra proper to make this product. In Nahuatzen the technique of making flat concrete tiles was introduced in 1944. Such tiles are replacing the less durable clay ones in some mestizo towns.

TEXTILES

286 In 35 modern Tarascan villages spinning and weaving of cotton, wool, or agave fiber are carried on as cottage industries. Both indigenous and European techniques are employed, neither having changed since the 16th century. Since the beginning of the present century, however, factory-made textiles from large Mexican towns have begun to displace some home-woven articles, but indigenous conservatism still supports the native handicraft.

[177] **Spinning.**—Formerly Tarascan weavers spun raw cotton from the *tierra caliente*, but at present commercial cotton thread, purchased in mestizo markets, is prepared for weaving by twisting five to six strands on the spinning wheel. Today only raw wool and agave fiber are homespun, the latter with the native *malacate* (uipinu), or hand spindle with round clay wheel, the former with the 16th century spinning wheel (*torno*). (See Beals, 1946, p. 36, for illustration of spinning wheel.) Both cotton thread and spun wool are usually colored locally with aniline dyes purchased in mestizo markets.

[286] **Weaving.**—Tarascans weave all agave and cotton fabrics on the native belt loom (*patákua* (Paracho); *jopáatakua* (Charapan, Tarecuato)), a horizontal loom which has a backstrap and is

286 found in most parts of indigenous America south of the United States (pl. 11). Customarily, only women operate this loom; however, in Tarecuato agave fiber is woven with it by both men and women, and in Tanaco, exclusively by men. Until the 1880's the most important fabric made with the belt loom was the cotton *manta*, a simple white cloth used for native clothing since pre-Conquest days. The cheap factory-made cottons of Puebla and Veracruz have completely displaced the indigenous *manta*, so that today Tarascans weave women's and men's belts (*fajas*), shawls (*rebozos*), aprons (*delanteras*), tablecloths and napkins (*servilletas*). Widths of cloth ranging from 1½ inches (women's belts) to more than a yard (*rebozos*) can be woven on these looms. Designs are usually woven into the above-named articles, the warp threads being first arranged for large widths on a long stick (*šekuárakua*) and for the narrow *fajas* on the *šekuáni*, an arrangement of four to five small sticks placed in the ground. Some of the finest examples of cotton weaving are found in the Sierra pueblos: Paracho (whose women make the Tarascan "*rebozo corriente*"), Ahuiran (women's belts), Angahuan (women's belts, aprons, *rebozos*), Charapan (belts, aprons, tablecloths), San Lorenzo (tablecloths, belts).

In the early colonial period the weaving of agave fiber was apparently widespread in the Sierra (AGN Congregaciones, f. 14), but today it is limited to Tarecuato and Tanaco.¹⁰⁹ In these villages the main agave fiber products are *morrales* (square bag with shoulder straps), *ayates* (coarse piece for wrapping articles to be carried on back), and *costales* (coarsely woven sacks for carrying goods on mules and burros). The fiber of *magüey bruto*

283 (*akám̄ba t'afm̄iti*) is used for the finely woven *morrales*, while that of *magüey del toro* (*torakám̄ba*) is employed for the coarser *ayates* and *costales*. Leaves of the agave plant are cut and the fiber extracted and carded. After drying, it is spun by (1) rolling fibers on the thigh with the hand, or (2) with the *malacate*. The fibers are woven on the belt loom in the same fashion as cotton¹¹⁰ (pl. 11). A piece of the agave fabric is doubled over and sewn on the sides to make the *morral*, and a shoulder cord is added. Other agave fiber products made in Tarecuato include rope and

¹⁰⁹ Agave fiber products were manufactured in Pichátaro during the last century (A.A.M., siglo XIX, leg. 707).

¹¹⁰ The loom for weaving agave fiber is called *uápatakus* in Tarascan.

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cord; these and the woven articles are marketed in Guanajuato, Jalisco, the *tierra caliente*, and in all parts of the present Tarascan area.

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Woolen products are woven mainly on the European loom, which was introduced early in the 16th century.¹⁴¹ During most of the colonial period this loom was used principally in the *obrajes*, or cloth mills established by Spaniards in various parts of Mexico near an abundant supply of wool. Indians first learned European weaving techniques in these mills, the labor for which came from surrounding native pueblos. By 1540 an *obraje*, operated by 26 forced native workers, had been set up in Acámbaro (Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, p. 33), and before the close of the century woolen mills existed in Taximaroa and Valladolid (Zavala and Castello, 1939-46, vol. 6, p. 225). Moreover, Indians quickly learned to spin wool, for tributes of spun wool were exacted from some pueblos, possibly to supply *obrajes* nearby.¹⁴² It is not clear when the Tarascans began to use the hand loom in their own villages; possibly some looms were set up in the northern towns in the 16th century.¹⁴³ A report of 1789 (AGN Historia, vol. 73) on the Tarascan pueblos of Lake Pátzcuaro and the Sierra, however, mentions the use only of the native loom. The first indication of a native wool industry in the Tarascan area comes from the Martínez de Lejarza report of 1822, which cites the *obrajeros* of San Juan Parangaricutiro (later the most renowned of the Tarascan blanket-weaving towns) and of several northern mestizo towns.¹⁴⁴ Tarascan wool weaving on a commercial scale may be post-colonial, having little economic basis until the break-down of the large woolen mills at the close of the colonial period. Today woolen blankets (*cobijas*, *serapes*) are made on the European hand loom in 24 Tarascan towns, Nahuatzen and prevolcano Parangaricutiro being the largest producers.

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¹⁴¹ Strands of wool are sometimes mixed with cotton in making women's belts. Often the warp is of woolen strands, the woof of cotton thread.

¹⁴² For example, ca. 1540 the people of Puruandiro (Michoacán) contributed each week two arrobas of spun wool (Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, p. 117).

¹⁴³ The *Relación de Chilchota* (Mss. Nac.) states that some natives in the town made clothes of wool, but the type of loom used is not given. Moreover, according to the *Relación de Cutitao* (Mss. Nac.), the Indians living around the lake "... *hacían lana a los comerciantes para hacer ropas para vestirse, y sus mujeres la hacían* ..." Again, the type of loom used to weave wool is not given.

¹⁴⁴ The northern towns mentioned: Morelia, Zimapanero, Zitácuaro, Taximaroa, Jiquilpan, Huarachita, La Piedad, Huaniqueo, and Tanguamandapio. At that time the latter pueblo was wholly Tarascan; according to Martínez de Lejarza (1824, p. 237), "... *sus habitantes trabajan telares de algodón y lana*."

286 ducers. In many towns only three of four *obrajeros* operate full time and produce mainly for local consumption. Raw wool is purchased locally, is washed, carded, dried, and spun by the *obrajero*. In addition to manufacturing blankets, some weavers in Nahuatzen, Charapan, and [438] Tanaco make woolen cloth for the traditional black skirt, which is still worn by most Tarascan women. Such skirts, however, are being made increasingly from factory-woven woolens purchased in mestizo towns.

531 **Embroidery and sewing.**—In the Sierra villages of San Lorenzo, Tarecuato, Angahuan, Ahufran, 438 Cuahajo, Nahuatzen, and Charapan some women specialize in cross-stitching and embroidering designs on blouses (*huipiles*), napkins, and tablecloths. Many of these articles are for tourist trade in Uruapan, Zamora, and Pátzcuaro. 286 During the colonial period and the first half of the 19th century, the men and women of Ahufran and Pomacuarán knitted men's stockings of cotton thread, using otate needles (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 344; Martínez de Lejarza, 1824, pp. 179-180). [439] Ahufran stockings were sold to mestizos and Spaniards over a wide area, but this trade declined after the change in styles of men's clothing in the early 1800's.

294 **Hat making.**—Among the Tarascans this industry was introduced probably in early colonial days.¹⁴⁵ However, the first mention of the industry comes from the report of 1789, which cites it in Nurio (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 348). [177] There, hats were made of wool, likely by a felting process, but the industry had disappeared by the end of the last century. None of the colonial sources mentions the manufacture of straw hats in Tarascan towns. Old men from Pichátaro remember hat making during their childhood, which fact at least dates the industry in the last half of the 19th century. (Palm-leaf hats were made in Morelia at the end of the colonial period, according to Martínez de Lejarza, 1824, p. 29.) 294 Today hats (principally of palm leaf, some of wheat straw) are made in seven Tarascan towns, 438 Jarácuaro Island being the main center.¹⁴⁶ Palm leaf brought up from the *tierra caliente* is cut in thin sections, which are braided into strips, called

¹⁴⁵ According to tradition, hat making was one of the many industries which Don Vasco de Quiroga taught the natives. (Leon, 1904, p. 63.)

¹⁴⁶ At least one member (and often three or four) of every family on Jarácuaro Island makes hats. Having little tillable land, this pueblo is one of the most specialized home-industry towns in the Tarascan area.

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294 palm are tied on one cord, half-hitched to the second one, and then tied back to the first; the loose end of the strip is permitted to hang over the second cord, thus forming a drainage surface similar to thatch (pl. 12). The process is repeated, adding a new row of tied strips to the previous one until the garment (4 ft. long and 3 ft. wide) is completed. Arantepacua *capotes* are marketed as far north as Guanajuato. No mention is made of these raincoats in the colonial sources, nor is there a Tarascan word for the garment. It is not improbable that the *capote* is an introduced trait.

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Broommaking.—This is another minor industry now practiced by a few men in Arantepacua. Pimu palm leaves are symmetrically arranged around the end of a finished pine stick and then tied with agave fiber or a braided strip of palm. The result is a common broom found in all parts of central Mexico.

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WOODCRAFT

322 According to the early Spanish chroniclers, the Tarascans were clever craftsmen in wood, and under the instruction of Spanish masters the natives became among the best carpenters in New Spain (La Rea, 1945, p. 20; Escobar, 1924, p. 147). By 1580 Indian carpenters in at least four towns—Pátzcuaro, Necotlán (Undameó), Tiripitío, and Tingüindín—were turning out European-styled tables, chairs, and writing desks, which found ready sale among Spanish colonists in all parts of Michoacán.¹⁸⁰ At that time lathe work was established in Pátzcuaro, and probably before 1540 Tarascans had begun to carve saddle frames for Spanish horsemen (Molotínfa, 1903, p. 183). Like other Tarascan industries, woodwork was probably a rudimentary pre-Conquest craft greatly modified and improved by European techniques. However, the present commercial types of Tarascan woodwork—cabinet work, lathe work, and adz work—all appear to have been developed in the 16th century.

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Specialized woodwork (apart from lumbering and shake making) was formerly more widespread among Tarascans than at present. At the end of the 18th century wood objects were manufactured in 21 pueblos (AGN Historia, vol. 73), today in only 13 towns. In but eight of the latter is the

¹⁸⁰ Rel. de Pátzcuaro, 1581 (Martínez, 1899, p. 47); Mus. Nac., leg. 162: Rel. de Chocomañán, Rel. de Necotlán; Rel. de Tiripitío, ms. (in García Library, Univ. of Texas).

322 industry more than 150 years old; in only five of the present towns do more than 25 percent of the working population engage in woodwork.

● [17] Adz work.—This is the simplest of the wood techniques now practiced by Tarascans (and by other Indian groups, as well as by mestizos in many parts of Mexico). Before the Conquest the Indians shaped boats from a single log and carved delicate figures on throwing sticks and tom-toms, possibly using obsidian and copper cutting tools. With the introduction of the European steel adz and gouge early in the 16th century, native wood carving was greatly facilitated. One of the earliest European objects which the Tarascans carved with the adz was the saddle frame (*fuste*), an industry which disappeared 100 years ago. Today wooden spoons and bowls (*bateas*) of softwoods are the principal adz and gouge products, Pamatácuaro and its offspring settlements Sirio and San Benito being the chief producers.¹³¹ These objects are also made in the Tarascan villages of Turicuaró, Cumachuén, Pichátaro, Zirosto (formerly important) and Sevina (where the industry was introduced a few years ago), and in the mestizo towns of Pátzcuaro, Tócuaro, Zirahuén, Uruapan, Quiroga. Spoons and bowls are made from softwoods: *jaboncillo* (*ápu*), *palo blanco* (*urápit-áku*), and *aile* (*pámu*). Occasionally *bateas* are made of pine. Tools include the common adz and variously shaped gouges, which are driven with a wooden mallet (pl. 13). The products of Pamatácuaro and surrounding settlements are marketed in all parts of Michoacán and sometimes are taken as far as Guadalajara and Mexico City.

[412]

Lathe work.—This represents one of the most characteristic forms of modern Tarascan woodcraft, Paracho being the center of the *torneros*. Formerly the simple bow lathe was employed to make bowls, vases, candlesticks, chocolate beaters (*molinillos*), chessmen, toys (tops, yoyos), darning eggs, etc. (See Beals, 1946, p. 43, for illustration of bow lathe.) Since 1942, however, when a power line was constructed near the town, most of the bows have been replaced by electrically powered lathes. About six *torneros* in Paracho and five in neighboring Ahufran still use the bow. Formerly turned objects, chiefly rosaries, choco-

¹³¹ It is doubtful that wooden *bateas* were carved before the Spanish Conquest. Gourd of *Oreocetes* also probably functioned for the modern *batea*. The "beater" employed in early Spanish gold panning in the Sierra Gorda were likely fashioned from *Oreocetes* gourds.

322 late beaters, and *malacates*, were made in Charapan
 [438] and Cocucho, but this activity has now disappeared. Most of the turned objects are shaped from *madroño* wood (*panáskaa*). Carving is done by pressing variously shaped steel chisels and gouges against the whirling block of wood. In Paracho, designs are painted and burned into objects, and the surface lacquered or varnished. [531] The wheel lathe, an early Spanish introduction, is [177] used by most cabinetmakers in the area for turning wood.

Cabinet work.—As mentioned earlier, cabinet work was rapidly adopted by Tarascan craftsmen in the early colonial period. In the 17th and 18th centuries inventories of miners' and merchants' household goods in west-central and northern Mexico rarely fail to mention chairs, tables, boxes "de Mechoacán." The majority of present Tarascan towns has at least one cabinetmaker who partially satisfies local demand for furniture. In [438] Paracho, Corupo, and Cuanajo—the Tarascan furniture centers—carpenters make chairs, tables, bed frames. Cuanajo is famed for its wooden chests, which are marketed in all parts of Michoacán. Most furniture is made from pine wood with simple tools (saw, mallet, plane, chisel, gouge). As mentioned above, chair and table legs are turned on the wheel lathe (fig. 6). The more common jointing techniques used include mor-

[P. 70-2]

325 southern and northern drainages of the lower
 172 Balsas (Guerrero). However, the mines of
 316 Inguarán in the northern drainage of the lower
 Balsas in Michoacán were the main source of the
 metal. Smaller deposits, such as those of Sinagua,
 were gophered over a wide area. The villages
 [438] of La Huacana, Jicalán, Sinagua, and possibly
 Tzatzio appear to have been the chief pre-Colum-
 bian copper refining centers.¹²⁷

325 Needing copper for the manufacture of brass
 438 cannon, the Spaniards quickly levied tribute in
 copper bars on various pueblos in the Balsas and
 Tepalcatepec Basins. Later, adventurers (in the
 name of the Crown) took over the native mines
 [47] at Inguarán, probably introducing European
 smelting techniques. The main 16th-century
 Spanish smelting and refining center was Tzatzio,
 10 miles each of Ario. This center was located
 within pine and oak forests, which afforded raw
 materials for charcoal, and was near the chief
 highway from Pátzcuaro to the *tierra caliente*.
 Copper ore and probably native copper was car-
 ried by Indians to Tzatzio from the Inguarán
 mines, which lay 15 miles to the south (AGN
 General de Parte, vol. 5, ff. 311-313, 1601).
 Tzatzio was probably an ancient copper center,
 and the experienced Tarascan metallurgists were
 retained by the Spaniards to continue with Euro-
 pean methods. Before the end of the 16th century
 the Spanish Crown had established an *asiento*
 in the Michoacán copper industry, in order to
 insure a steady supply of metal for the found-
 ries in Mexico City.¹²⁸ Between 1607 and 1614

¹²⁷ The *Suma de Visitas*, ca. 1540, states that the Spaniards exacted tribute of copper bars from La Huacana and Jicalán (Pase y Troncoso, 1906, vol. 1, pp. 123, 264). Moreover, every 20 days 20 Indians of Coyula carried copper bars to Mexico (*Ibid.*, p. 80). Coyula, located near the confluence of the Balsas and Coatzacoalcas Rivers, may have been a collecting point for small lots of copper refined in various pueblos of the middle Balsas drainage. At the end of the 16th century copper was still being mined, refined, and made into tools at Sinagua (*Mus. Nac.*, leg. 102, Rel. de Cinguasingso). Tzatzio was one of the first Spanish copper smelting centers in the area, and was probably an old Tarascan center as well (AGI And. de México, leg. 206). In passing, it should be noted that the old La Huacana was located near the Inguarán mines. In 1739 the town was destroyed by the eruption of Jerónimo, and a new settlement, the La Huacana seen on modern maps, was established near Tamaucare 16 miles west of the old site (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 263-264).

¹²⁸ Under the *asiento*, or contract, system, control of various industries was farmed out to private individuals. In the case of the copper industry of Michoacán, administrative control was purchased from the Crown for 6-year periods. The administrator was obliged to furnish the Government a stipulated amount of copper annually at a fixed price. In 1599 an official survey was made of the copper industry in Michoacán. The surveyor recommended that owing to forest depletion around Tzatzio and the consequent difficulty in charcoal supply, refining operations should be moved to Ario, near abundant pine forests (AGI And. de México, leg. 206). It is doubtful that this move was made, since in 1607 copper was still being refined at Tzatzio (Zavala and Castille, 1909-48, vol. 4, p. 165).

325 official copper refining operations had shifted 20
438 miles northward to Santa Clara (Villa Escalante), which has remained the copper center of Michoacán to this day (AGN Minería, vol. 22, expd. 3). In addition to copper bars for the royal artillery, the colonial administrators established the manufacture of caldrons and other copper vessels, which they sold to all parts of New Spain (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 389).¹²⁹ Colonial copper production, however, was not limited to the royal refineries at Santa Clara, for as late as 1789 braziers were still being made by native copper-smiths at Jicalán (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 366). Moreover, some copperwork was done in Pátscuaro throughout the colonial period.¹³⁰

Today the sole survivors of the former Tarascan copper industry are some 30 mestizo copper-smiths in Santa Clara, where the renowned *casos* (caldrons), vases, and bowls are still manufactured. Ore or native copper is no longer refined; instead, scrap copper is purchased, melted down, and cast in earthen molds. Sixteenth-century hand bellows are still used to force an air draft; charcoal is employed for fuel. The cast vessel is finished and hardened by alternate annealing and hammering.

● [17] **Ironworking.**—With its concomitant tools (bellows, hammers, anvils, tongs, etc.), ironworking was introduced into Tarascan economy early in the 16th century. Curiously, one Sierra village, San Felipe de los Herreros, became the foremost ironworking center of Michoacán during the colonial period and the early 19th century. In 1644 bridle bits, spurs, locks and keys were fashioned and marketed in surrounding Spanish and mestizo towns (Basalenque, 1886, vol. 1, p. 467). As late as 1851, 68 families (practically the entire town) were professional smiths, supplying the countryside with plow tips, hoe blades, axheads, woodworking tools, etc. In 1946 three

¹²⁹ During the 17th century Tarascans from all parts of Michoacán were forced to work in the Inguarán mines and the *fundiciones* at Santa Clara. Most of the *fundidores* came from the *sierra caliente* and from the *sierra fría* towns of Ziruto and Patzenaro (Zavala and Castelló, 1926-28, vol. 6, p. 190; vol. 7, p. 340). In 1789 there were 8 copper refineries at Santa Clara, each operated by 30 to 40 men (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 389).

¹³⁰ The *Relación de Patzenaro* of 1681 (p. 47) mentions "*herreros y calderas*." Basalenque (1886, vol. 1, p. 451), writing in 1844, states that copper bells were made in Patzenaro. As late as 1902 (Romero 1902, p. 7) writers of Patzenaro copper-smiths, who were refining ore from Inguarán and Churumana. Several new copper deposits in Michoacán were exploited during the last quarter of the 18th century, e. g., the mines of Aprato, near the old site of Urecho (AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 386) and those of Chiranguana, near Tzucutha, south of Zitacuaro (AGN Minería, vol. 22, expd. 1; Martínez de Lejuna, 1924, p. 80).

[P. 73-b]

444 which handles mainly staple food imports (salted dried beef, dried fish, salt, piloncillo, lard, beans, and wheat flour) and beverages (soft drinks, beer, and hard liquors). A small assortment of canned goods can be purchased in the stores of the larger towns. Often other items, such as cigarettes, kerosene, and metal household ware, are carried. In the small villages stores are customarily operated by well-to-do Tarascan families, often by the wife and children, while the man farms.¹⁶⁷ In the large pueblos the storekeepers are usually mestizos who have moved in from neighboring towns.¹⁶⁸ Significantly, the infiltration of Spanish-speaking storekeepers into indigenous towns often represents one of the initial steps toward hispanicization of the native population.¹⁶⁹

(m) The professional traders.—The *huacalero* (in-spikuri, or "one who trades") represents the last vestige of the ancient Indian carriers (*tamemes*), formerly important agents of distribution throughout Mexico. Few such traveling merchants, each of whom carries his wares in a wooden crate (*huacal*, *kópaxakua*) tied to his back, remain; the majority have been displaced by burro and motor transportation. As late as 1900 large numbers of Tarascan *huacaleros* from many Sierra villages carried handicrafts into the Balsas Basin, the coast of Guerrero, and Colima and returned with tropical fruit, salt, and cheese. Today about 15 *huacaleros* operate out of Pamatácuaro, carrying locally made wooden spoons and *bateas*, Patamban pottery, *morrales* from

[438] made goods from Zamora, Omdalajara, Morelia, and Mérida. Regional
[443] handicrafts were represented as follows:

Article:	Origin	Vendors (number)
Blankets.....	Charapan.....	10 walking vendors.
Blankets.....	Jiquilpan.....	1 stall.
Rebosos.....	Paracho.....	1 stall.
Women's belts.....	Nahuatzen.....	1 stall.
Straw hats.....	Apa.....	1 stall.
Agave rope.....	Tareumtze.....	2 stalls.
Pottery.....	Patamban.....	13 stalls.
Pottery.....	Santa Fe.....	1 stall.
Pottery.....	San Juan Tlaquepaque (Jalisco).....	1 stall.
Wooden tops.....	Paracho.....	1 stall.
Wicker baskets.....	Tunguandapio.....	1 stall.
Huareches.....	Los Reyes.....	3 stalls.
Huareches.....	Periban.....	1 stall.

¹⁶⁷ Charán, as Beals points out (1946, p. 79), is unique in that, although it is the largest Tarascan town, the storekeepers are Tarascan.

¹⁶⁸ For example, although Tareumtze is almost wholly native in speech, its three or four stores are operated by mestizos. Merchants of Paracho, Patamban, and Nahuatzen are all mestizos.

[609] ¹⁶⁹ Apart from its distributive function, the village store (mestizo or indigenous) frequently serves as the only readily accessible public place where a stranger may introduce himself and ask questions about the town. Except in the municipal seats, the town officials, all of whom hold nonenumerative posts, are rarely found in the *jutera*, or town hall.

443 Tarecuato, and medicinal herbs of the Sierra to
 439 Colima, most parts of Jalisco, the *tierra caliente* of
 Michoacán and Guerrero. Tropical fruits make
 up most of the return load. A few professional
 carriers haul pottery from Santa Fé to Quiroga
 and, at times, to Morelia. *Huacaleros* from other
 towns have practically disappeared.

443 Although they do not use the large *huacal*,
 438 many women of the Sierra devote most of their
 time to carrying various products to the sur-
 rounding mestizo markets. For instance, the
 women of the Pamatácuaro *ranchos* (Uringuitiro,
 Tierra Blanca, etc.) carry *ocote* splinters, wooden
 spoons, and tamales to Zamora, Chilchota,
 Patamban, and the Lake area.¹⁷⁶ Again, some
 women of Corupo collect eggs and chickens from
 surrounding towns and take them to the Sunday
 market at Uruapan.¹⁷⁷

492 The *arrieros*, or the "mule-skinners," in spite
 443 of inroads of motor transportation, still account
 for a large part of the interregional trade in
 Michoacán. Mule and burro transport came into
 use on a large scale in New Spain after the forced
 ● [177] services of the *tamemes* were restricted in the last
 half of the 16th century (Spain. Law, Statutes,
 etc., Lib. VI, tit. 12, ley 6-10). Indians, however,
 were slow to adopt animal transport. Even in
 the latter part of the 18th century the majority
 of the muleteers operating in Michoacán were
 Spaniards or mestizos, who hired Indians as
 helpers. By 1789 some Tarascans owned mule
 or burro trains in Cherán, Urapicho, Angahuan,
 Charapan, and Pomacuarán (AGN Historia, vol.
 [439] 73). Even today the greater part of the *arrieros*
 operating in the Tarascan area are mestizos with
 headquarters in some of the northern towns.

¹⁷⁶ During such trips the women of these ranchos may be gone from their households for 3 or 4 days. In their absence housework is done by the children or the men, who rarely travel.

¹⁷⁷ Such rounds may last a week. The women visit Charapan, Zacan, Xirito, Pamatácuaro on certain days, returning to Corupo by Friday, and arrive at Uruapan Saturday evening. Eggs are carried in a small crate held on the back with the spurs. Six or seven chickens are tied on the top of the box, and, in addition, many women carry one or two fowls in their arms.

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When others of the more isolated and conservative Tarascan towns are studied, probably more games will come to light. In the more progressive towns, games seem to be almost totally lacking, except such Mexican innovations as card games. For example, at Cherán, which was the subject of intensive study, the only game encountered was *aldasukuni* if one except the various European games of modern character. Even *aldasukuni* is now rarely played and few of the young people know it.

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[P. 1]

INTRODUCTION

Prehistoric Tarascans, residing for centuries in the lake country of Michoacán, Mexico, asked questions about things around them. They asked why the land was sometimes flat, sometimes hilly, sometimes rich, and sometimes poor. They wanted to know why the precious waters of a spring suddenly erupted from beneath a tree on the hillside. They felt that the wonderful light-giving sun, the hurrying stream, the glittering stars, and the rustling leaves all required explanation.

Before the Spanish Conquest, the oral accounts of the *Petamuti* (high priest) explained the phenomena of nature through the great deeds of Tarascan gods and culture heroes. Knowledge of historical events was similarly preserved.

Some of these stories, to which Catholic and modern elements have been added, are still "history" to the native Tarascans living in isolated pueblos in the mountains. As with many people, it is what the Tarascans believe to be the historical truth, rather than the actual history itself, which most profoundly influences their thoughts and actions.

BACKGROUND OF THE LEGENDS

The Tarascan area has contracted since the time of the Spanish Conquest. Located approximately 250 miles northwest of Mexico City in the State of Michoacán, it centers in several geographic areas which form a fairly continuous block.

In the area around Zacapu (Fig. 1), traditional point of origin of the Tarascan dynasty, remain a few purely Tarascan villages. Bordering the Mexico City-Guadalajara highway a few miles northwest of Zacapu is a small, pleasant valley approximately a mile wide and six miles long. It is called La Canada and in it nestle ten of the Once Pueblos of Pre-Conquest days.

000 ten of the *Once Pueblos* of pre-Conquest days.

133 South of La Cañada stretches an elevated area of high mountains which cradle wide and fertile valleys. This is the fabled La Sierra country.

[361] East of La Sierra the land falls away to the lower elevation of the lake country which includes the basins of Lake Cuitzeo and Lake Pátzcuaro. The latter, horseshoe in shape with the curve at the west and the two prongs to the east, has its northern and western shores dotted with Tarascan villages. Within the fastness of the lake lie three important Tarascan islands: Janitzio, an astonishingly enormous rock rising high above the blue expanse, with its picturesque fishing village clinging to one side; Jarácuaro, wide and flat, with its village of hat weavers; and La Pacanda, high and flat, with its farms sitting up above the water's edge.

178 These areas form the solid nucleus of the Tarascan country, whose people, with surprising vigor, resist outside influences threatening to destroy their traditional way of life.

137 This is a hilly country with conifers on the highest slopes. The lower hills are starred in the summer rainy season with bright red, clear yellow, and delicate violet wildflowers. Michoacán does not become drab even in the dry season, but rather takes on the colors of old tapestries. Its soil is reddish or saffron, its houses dusty white to deep gray, its roofs brownish red, and its lakes azure blue.

174 Into this area came the ancestors of the Tarascans sometime between the seventh and twelfth centuries of our era. The German [114] scholar Seler (1908, p. 33), in his interpretation of a questionable [172] sixteenth-century codex called the "Lienzo de Jucutacato," argues that they entered the region in the seventh century, but archaeological evidence does not seem to support such an early [131] date. Certainly by the twelfth century they were located in the Lake Pátzcuaro region, in Zacapu, and in La Sierra at Patamban and Tarecuato (Fig. 1).

648 In olden days the Tarascans were fierce fighters who, over a period of time, forged an empire which successfully repulsed attacks by Aztec armies. It was their hatred of the Aztecs that

[Text continues on p. 4]

LEGENDS

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tance the Malaltzincas were granted a large area between Tacámbaro and Huetamo. The word Huetamo itself is Matlaltzinca, and there is still a "Pirinda" barrio (ward) in the town (Osborne, 1943, p. 61).

Clearly discernible are elements of Spanish Catholic acculturation in the dream portion of the legend. Also evident is the philosophical rationalization of a conquered people who had to accept and adjust to alien rule for an indefinite time into the future.

The Legend

The first morning rays illuminated the sky over Tingambato. It was the month of *duarí* in the year of *ocelotl*. Three small cloudlets had just finished bathing the corpulent *ocote* trees and the sighing pines with a light rainfall.

The yellow-like dust of this land was unfertile, whereas in days long past it had been the site of great forests and immense meadows covered with exuberant vegetation, wild and fruitful. Formerly the jaguar had stalked here among the undergrowth; the timid *cú* bird had rendered his monotonously doleful notes; and, above all, the hummingbird (Tzintzún), the divine bird of the Tarascans, had sung his gorgeous melodies as if in offering to the god Curicaueri.

The day was fresh and all of nature was awakening. Over in the distance, mountain tops were running in and out of the shadows, just as in a dream of long ago hope had run its path of illusions. Camachuén was dreaming of those faraway things of the spirit, of those faraway things of love, where love was losing to hopelessness.

Camachuén (the protected of the gods), king of Tingambato, was thoughtfully walking in his garden which was filled with trees and flowers. There had been no calamity concerning his people which could be bothering him, nor was he concerned with Irichacuara, king of Patzcuaro, with whom he had fought in times past. Furthermore, both King Characu, king of the Matlatzincas

DISCUSSION

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The dream portion in the same legend reveals the nature of the Tarascan people's subsequent acceptance of the Conquest through the successful teachings of the Catholic church. [539] [195] [648] [197]

As literature, the legends are presented in language which seems remarkably artistic and urbane for the Tarascan's menial status and lack of education in modern Mexico. However, it should be remembered that from the beginning these stories had a direct religious association and the Petamuti undoubtedly demanded rather exact adherence to theoretical norms of oral literature by the neophyte who would succeed him as the bearer and guardian of folk tradition. The conditions of their annual telling at the fiesta of *Uaseata cóncuaro* to the assembled tribe encouraged the priest to develop them into emotional, oral literature. Some of this pre-Conquest tendency has continued to the present time. Also, these legends have probably become embellished with illusions and atmospheric details by skilled narrators in historic times. This author-translator chose the most sophisticated and excitingly literary rendition available where a choice presented itself. [539] [113] [871] [194] [196] [128]

One of the most impressive facts about these legends, even to the non-analytical person, is the presentation of a "mood" and the changes in mood as the given story progresses. The narrator seems to live and to feel the story. [539]

For some of these legends to have been preserved so well since the Spanish Conquest may reflect, to some extent, the relative isolation of Michoacán, but it seems more likely to indicate the importance these legends have had and still have in Tarascan life. In the present Tarascan area, nearly four hundred and fifty years of acculturation have obscured many traits of native provenience. Today's economic specialization and trade patterns are apparently based upon aboriginal conditions (West, 1948, p. 57), yet they are known to have been formalized by Europeans (Beals, 1946, p. 210). Nevertheless, the character of such things as marriage, family life, and the people's attitudes toward life's values—the real educative forces affecting the thinking and personality of Tarascans—appear to be relatively unchanged. [131] [182] [539] [177] [178] [43] [463]

Despite the more recent modifications in material culture and social organization, the basic values woven into the early legends [539] [829] [577]

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
[End Plate 3]

NU34 Tarasco NU34



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Plate III. Views in Morelia

Upper, Ignacio Peña, narrator of the myth of creation, in front of author's apartment.

Lower, Spanish aqueduct built to bring water from mountains to city.

[177]●